

# Christian Library:

CONSISTING OF

EXTRACTS from and ABRIDGMENTS of

THE

CHOICEST PIECES

OF

## Practical Divinity,

Which have been publish'd in the

ENGLISH TONGUE.

---

IN FIFTY VOLUMES.

---

By JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

Late FELLOW of *Lincoln-College*, OXFORD.

---

VOL. XLIII.

---

BRISTOL:

Printed by E. FARLEY.

---

MDCCLV.



CHRISTIAN LIBRARY

EXTRACTS FROM AND ABSTRACTS OF

THE



ENGLISH TONGUE

AND THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

BY JOHN WESTLEY, M.A.

Lecturer of the University of Cambridge

VOL. XIII.

BRISTOL

Printed by E. F. ARLEY

MCCCLXXV

EXTRACTS

FROM

DR. SOUTH'S

SERMONS.



A 2

SER-

EXTRACTS

FROM

DR. JOVH.



SECTIONS

\*\*\*\*\*

BRITISH MUSEUM  
LONDON

\*\*\*\*\*

# S E R M O N I.

Preached at COURT, &c.

PROV. iii. 17.

*Her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness.*

THE Text relating to something going before, must carry our Eye back to the thirteenth Verse, where we shall find, that the Thing, of which these Words are affirmed, is Wisdom: A Name by which the Spirit of God was here pleased to express to us Religion, and thereby to tell the World, what before it was not aware of, and perhaps will not yet believe, that those two great Things that so engross the Desires and Designs of both the nobler and ignobler Sort of Mankind, are to be found in Religion; namely, Wisdom and Pleasure; and that the former is the direct Way to the latter, as Religion is to both.



THAT Pleasure is Man's chiefest Good, (because indeed it is the Perception of Good that is properly Pleasure) is an Assertion most certainly true, though under the common Acceptance of it, not only false, but odious: For according to this, Pleasure and Sensuality pass for Terms equivalent; and therefore, he that takes it in this Sense, alters the Subject of the Discourse. Sensuality is indeed a Part, or rather one Kind of Pleasure, such an one as it is: For Pleasure in general, is the consequent Apprehension of a suitable Object, suitably apply'd to a rightly disposed Faculty; and so must be conversant both about the Faculties of the Body, and of the Soul respectively; as being the Result of the Fruitions belonging to both.

Now amongst those many Arguments, used to press upon Men the Exercise of Religion, I know none that are like to be so successful, as those that answer, and remove the Prejudices that generally possess, and bar up the Hearts of Men against it: Amongst which, there is none so prevalent in Truth, though so little owned in Pretence, as that it is an Enemy to Mens Pleasures, that it bereaves them of all the Sweets of Converse, dooms them to an absurd and perpetual Melancholy, designing to make the World nothing else but a great Monastery. With which Notion of Religion, Nature and Reason seems to have great Cause to be dissatisfied. For since God never created any Faculty, either in Soul or Body, but withall prepared for it a suitable Object, and that in order to its Gratification; can we think that Religion was design'd only for a Contradiction to Nature? And with the greatest and most irrational Tyranny in the World to tantalize and tie Men up from Enjoyment, in the Midst of  
all

all the Opportunities of Enjoyment? To place Men with the furious Affections of Hunger and Thirst in the very Bosom of Plenty; and then to tell them, that the Envy of Providence has sealed up every Thing that is suitable under the Character of *unlawful*? For certainly, first to frame Appetites fit to receive Pleasure, and then to interdict them with a *touch not, taste not*, can be Nothing else, than only to give them Occasion to devour and prey upon themselves; and so to keep Men under the perpetual Torment of an unsatisfied Desire: A Thing hugely contrary to the natural Felicity of the Creature, and consequently to the Wisdom and Goodness of the Great Creator.

HE therefore that would persuade Men to Religion, both with Art and Efficacy, must found the Persuasion of it upon this, that it interferes not with any rational Pleasure, that it bids No-body quit the Enjoyment of any one Thing that his Reason can prove to him ought to be enjoyed. It is confessed, when through the cross Circumstances of a Man's Temper or Condition, the Enjoyment of a Pleasure would certainly expose him to a greater Inconvenience, then Religion bids him quit it; that is, it bids him prefer the Endurance of a lesser Evil before a greater; and Nature itself does no less. Religion therefore intrenches upon none of our Privileges, invades none of our Pleasures; it may indeed sometimes command us to *change*, but never totally to *abjure* them.

BUT it is easily foreseen, that this Discourse will in the Beginning of it be encountered by an Argument from Experience, and therefore not more obvious than strong; namely, that it cannot but be the greatest Trouble in the World for a Man thus (as it were) even to shake off himself, and to defy  
his

his Nature, by a perpetual Thwarting of his innate Appetites and Desires; which yet is absolutely necessary to a severe and impartial Prosecution of a Course of Piety: Nay, and we have this asserted also, by the Verdict of *Christ* Himself, who still makes the Disciplines of Self-denial and the Cross, those terrible Blows to Flesh and Blood, the indispensable Requisites to the Being of his Disciples. All which being so, would not he that should be so hardy as to attempt to persuade Men to Piety from the Pleasures of it, be liable to that invective Taunt from all Mankind, that the *Israelites* gave to *Moses*; *Wilt thou put out the Eyes of this People?* Wilt thou persuade us out of our first Notions? Wilt thou demonstrate, that there is any Delight in a Cross, any Comfort in violent Abridgments, and which is the greatest Paradox of all, that the highest Pleasure is to abstain from it?

FOR Answer to which, it must be confessed, that all Arguments whatsoever against Experience are fallacious; and therefore, in order to the clearing of the Assertion laid down, I shall premise these two Considerations:

I. THAT Pleasure is in the Nature of it a relative Thing, and so imports a peculiar Relation and Correspondence to the State and Condition of the Person to whom it is a Pleasure. For as those who discourse of Atoms, affirm, that there are Atoms of all Forms, some round, some triangular, some square, and the like; all which are continually in Motion, and never settle 'till they fall into a fit Circumscription, or Place of the same Figure: So there are the like great Diversities of Minds and Objects. Whence it is, that this Object striking upon a Mind thus or thus disposed, flies off, and rebounds without making any Impression; but the  
same

same luckily happening upon another of a Disposition as it were framed for it, is presently catch'd at, and greedily clasp'd into the nearest Unions and Embraces.

2. THE other Thing to be considered, is this: That the Estate of all Men by Nature is more or less different from that Estate, into which the same Persons do, or may pass, by the Exercise of that which the Philosophers called *Virtue*, and into which Men are much more effectually and sublimely translated by that which we call *Grace*; that is, by the supernatural over-powering Operation of GOD's Spirit. The Difference of which two Estates consists in this; that in the former the sensitive Appetites rule and domineer; in the latter the supreme Faculty of the Soul, call'd *Reason*, sways the Sceptre, and acts the whole Man above the irregular Demands of Appetite and Affection.

THAT the Distinction between these two is not a mere Figment, framed only to serve an Hypothesis in Divinity; and that there is no Man but is really under one, before he is under the other, I shall prove, by shewing a Reason why it is so, or rather indeed why it cannot but be so. And it is this: Because every Man in the Beginning of his Life, for several Years, is capable only of exercising his sensitive Faculties and Desires, the Use of Reason not shewing itself 'till about the seventh Year of his Age; and then at length but (as it were) dawning in very imperfect Essays and Discoveries. Now it being undeniably evident, that every Faculty and Power grows stronger and stronger by Exercise; is it any Wonder at all, when a Man for the Space of his first six Years, and those the Years of Ductility and Impression, has been wholly ruled by the Propensions of Sense, at that Age very eager



eager and impetuous; that then after all, his Reason beginning to put forth itself, finds the Man prepossessed, and under another Power? So that it has much ado, by many little Steps and gradual Conquests, to recover its Prerogative from the Usurpations of Appetite, and so to subject the whole Man to its Dictates: The Difficulty of which is not conquered by some Men all their Days. And this is one true Ground of the Difference of a State of Nature, and a State of Grace, which some are pleased to scoff at in Divinity, who think that they confute all they laugh at, not knowing that it may be solidly evinced by mere Reason and Philosophy.

THESE two Considerations being premised, namely, that Pleasure implies a Proportion and Agreement to the respective States and Conditions of Men; and that the State of Men by Nature is vastly different from the Estate into which Grace or Virtue transplants them; all that Objection levell'd against the foregoing Assertion is very easily resolvable.

For there is no Doubt, but a Man, while he resigns himself up to the brutish Guidance of Sense and Appetite, has no Relish at all for the spiritual, refined Delights of a Soul clarified by Grace and Virtue. The Pleasures of an Angel can never be the Pleasures of a Hog. But this is the Thing that we contend for; that a Man having once advanced himself to a State of Superiority over the Controll of his inferior Appetites, finds an infinitely more solid and sublime Pleasure in the Delights proper to his Reason, than the same Person had ever conveyed to him by the bare Ministry of his Senses. His Taste is absolutely changed, and therefore that which pleased him formerly, becomes flat and insipid to his Appetite, now grown more masculine and

and severe. For as Age and Maturity passes a real and a marvellous Change upon the Diet and Recreations of the same Person; so that no Man at the Years and Vigour of Thirty, is either fond of Sugar plumbs or Rattles. In like Manner, when Reason, by the Assistance of Grace, has prevailed over, and out-grown the Encroachments of Sense, the Delights of Sensuality are to such an one but as an Hobby-horse would be to a Counsellor of State; or as tasteless, as a Bundle of Hay to an hungry Lion. Every Alteration of a Man's Condition infallibly infers an Alteration of his Pleasures.

THE *Athenians* laughed the Physiognomist to Scorn, who pretending to read Mens Minds in their Foreheads, described *Socrates* for a crabbed, lustful, proud, ill-natured Person; they knowing how directly contrary he was to that dirty Character. But *Socrates* bid them forbear laughing at the Man, for that he had given them a most exact Account of his Nature; but what they saw in him so contrary at the present, was from the Conquest that he had got over his natural Disposition by Philosophy. And now let any one consider, whether that *Anger*, that *Revenge*, that *Wantonness* and *Ambition*, that were the proper Pleasures of *Socrates*, under his natural Temper of *crabbed*, *lustful*, and *proud*, could have at all affected or enamoured the Mind of the same *Socrates*, made gentle, chaste, and humble by Philosophy.

ARISTOTLE says, "that were it possible to put a young Man's Eye into an old Man's Head, he would see as plainly and clearly as the other;" so could we infuse the Inclinations and Principles of a virtuous Person into him that prosecutes his Debauches with the greatest Keeness of Desire, and Sense of Delight, he would loath and reject them

as heartily as he now pursues them. *Diogenes* being asked at a Feast, why he did not continue eating as the rest did, answered him that asked him with another Question, pray why do you eat? Why, says he, for my Pleasure: Why so, says *Diogenes*, do I abstain for my Pleasure. And therefore the vain, the vicious, and luxurious Person argues at an high Rate of Inconsequence, when he makes his particular Desires, the general Measure of other Mens Delights. But the Case is so plain, that I shall not upbraid any Man's Understanding, by endeavouring to give it any farther Illustration.

BUT still, after all, I must not deny that the Change and Passage from a State of Nature, to a State of Virtue, is laborious, and consequently irksome and unpleasant: And to this it is, that all the fore-mentioned Expressions of our Saviour do allude. But surely the Baseness of one Condition, and the generous Excellency of the other, is a sufficient Argument to induce any one to a Change. For as no Man would think it a desirable Thing, to preserve the Itch upon himself, only for the Pleasure of Scratching, that attends that loathsome Distemper: So neither can any Man, that would be faithful to his Reason, yield his Ear to be bored through by his domineering Appetites, and so chuse to serve them for ever, only for those poor, thin Gratifications of Sensuality that they are able to reward him with. The Ascent up the Hill is hard and tedious, but the Serenity and fair Prospect at the Top is sufficient to incite the Labour of undertaking it, and to reward it being undertook. But the Difference of these two Conditions of Men, as the Foundation of their different Pleasures, being thus made out, to press Men with Arguments to pass from one to

the

the other, is not directly in the Way or Design of this Discourse.

YET before I come to declare positively the Pleasures that are to be found in the *Ways* of Religion, one of the grand Duties of which is stated upon Repentance; a Thing expressed to us by the grim Names of Mortification, Crucifixion, and the like: And that I may not proceed only upon absolute Negations, without some Concessions; we will see, whether this so harsh, dismal, and affrighting Duty of Repentance is so entirely Gall, as to admit of no Mixture, no Allay of Sweetness, to reconcile it to the Apprehensions of Reason and Nature.

Now Repentance consists properly of two Things:

1. SORROW for Sin.

2. CHANGE of Life.

A WORD briefly of them both.

I. AND first of *Sorrow for Sin*. Usually the Sting of Sorrow is this, that it neither removes nor alters the Thing we sorrow for; and so is but a Kind of Reproach to our Reason, which will be sure to accost us with this Dilemma. Either the Thing we sorrow for, is to be remedied, or it is not: If it is, why then do we spend the Time in Mourning, which should be spent in an active applying of Remedies? But if it is not, then is our Sorrow vain and superfluous, as tending to no real Effect. For no Man can weep his Father or his Friend out of the Grave, or mourn himself out of a bankrupt Condition. But this spiritual Sorrow is effectual to one of the greatest and highest Purposes,



poses, that Mankind can be concerned in. It is a Means to avert an impendent Wrath, to disarm an offended Omnipotence, and even to fetch a Soul out of the very Jaws of Hell. So that the End and Consequence of this Sorrow, sweetens the Sorrow itself: And, as *Solomon* says, *In the Midst of Laughter, the Heart is sorrowful*; so in the Midst of Sorrow here, the Heart may rejoice: For while it mourns, it reads, that *those that mourn shall be comforted*; and so while the Penitent weeps with one Eye, he views his Deliverance with the other. But then for the external Expressions, and Vent of Sorrow, we know that there is a certain Pleasure in Weeping; it is the Discharge of a big and a swelling Grief, of a full and a strangling Discontent; and therefore, he that never had such a Burden upon his Heart, as to give him Opportunity thus to ease it, has one Pleasure in this World yet to come.

2. As for the other Part of Repentance, which is *Change of Life*; this indeed may be troublesome in the Entrance, yet it is but the first bold Onset, the first resolute Violence and Invasion upon a vicious Habit, that is so sharp and afflicting. Every Impression of the Lancet cuts, but it is the first only that smarts. Besides, it is an Argument hugely unreasonable, to plead the Pain of passing from a vicious Estate, unless it were proved, that there was none in the Continuance under it: But surely, when we read of the *Service*, the *Bondage*, and the *Captivity* of Sinners, we are not entertained only with the Air of Words and Metaphors; and instead of Truth, put off with Similitudes. Let him that says it is a Trouble to refrain from a Debauch, convince us, that it is not a greater to undergo one; and that the Confessor did not impose a shrewd Penance upon the drunken Man, by bidding him go  
and

and be drunk again; and that Lisper, Raging, Redness of Eyes, and what is not fit to be named in such an Audience, is not more toilsome, than to be clean, and quiet, and discreet, and respected for being so. All the Trouble that is in it, is the Trouble of being sound, being cured, and being recovered. But if there be great Arguments for Health, then certainly there are the same for the obtaining of it; and so keeping a due Proportion between Spirituals and Temporals, we neither have nor pretend to greater Arguments for Repentance.

HAVING thus now cleared off all, that by Way of Objection can lie against the Truth asserted, by shewing the proper Qualification of the Subject, to whom only *the Ways of Wisdom* can be *Ways of Pleasantness*; for the farther Prosecution of the Matter in Hand, I shall shew what are those Properties that so peculiarly set off, and enhance the Excellency of this Pleasure.

I. THE First is, That it is the proper Pleasure of that Part of Man, which is the largest and most comprehensive of Pleasure, and that is his Mind: A Substance of a boundless Comprehension. The Mind of Man is an Image, not only of God's Spirituality, but of his Infinity. It is not like any of the Senses, limited to this or that Kind of Object: As the Sight intermeddles not with that which affects the Smell; but with an universal Superintendence, it arbitrates upon, and takes them in all. It is (as I may so say) an Ocean, into which all the little Rivulets of Sensation, both external and internal, discharge themselves. It is framed by GOD to receive all, and more than Nature can afford it; and so to be its own Motive to seek for something above Nature. Now this is that Part

of Man, to which the Pleasures of Religion properly belong; and that in a double Respect.

1. IN Reference to Speculation, as it sustains the Name of Understanding.

2. IN Reference to the Practice, as it sustains the Name of Conscience.

1. AND First for Speculation: The Pleasures of which have been sometimes so great, so intense, so engrossing of all the Powers of the Soul, that there has been no Room left for any other Pleasure. It has so called together all the Spirits to that one Work, that there has been no Supply to carry on the inferior Operations of Nature. Contemplation feels no Hunger, nor is sensible of any Thirst, but of that after Knowledge. How frequent and exalted a Pleasure did *David* find from his Meditation in the Divine Law? *All the Day long* it was the Theme of his Thoughts. The Affairs of the State, the Government of his Kingdom, might indeed employ, but it was this only that *refreshed* his Mind.

How short of this are the Delights of the Epicure? How vastly disproportionate are the Pleasures of the eating, and of the thinking Man? Indeed as different as the Silence of an *Archimedes* in the Study of a Problem, and the Stilness of a Sow at her Waffr. Nothing is comparable to the Pleasure of an active and a prevailing Thought: A Thought prevailing over the Difficulty and Obscurity of the Object, and refreshing the Soul with new Discoveries and Images of Things; and thereby extending the Bounds of Apprehension, and (as it were) enlarging the Territories of Reason.

Now

Now this Pleasure of the Speculation of Divine Things, is advanced upon a double Account:

(1.) THE Greatness.

(2.) THE Newness of the Object.

(1.) AND first for the Greatness of it. It is no less than the great GOD Himself, and that both in his Nature and his Works. For the Eye of Reason, like that of an Eagle, directs itself chiefly to the Sun, to a Glory that neither admits of a Superior, nor any Equal. Religion carries the Soul to the Study of every divine Attribute.

It poses it with the amazing Thoughts of Omnipotence; of a Power able to fetch up such a glorious Fabrick, as this of the World, out of the Abyss of Vanity and Nothing, and able to throw it back into the same original Nothing. It drowns us in the Speculation of the Divine Omniscience; that can maintain a steady infallible Comprehension of all Events in themselves contingent and accidental; and certainly know that, which does not certainly exist. It confounds the greatest Subtleties of Speculation, with the Riddles of GOD's Omnipresence; that can spread a single individual Substance through all Spaces; and yet without any Commensuration of Parts to any, or Circumscription within any, though totally in every one. And then for his Eternity; which *non-plusses* the strongest and clearest Conception, to comprehend how one single Act of Duration should measure all Periods and Portions of Time, without any of the distinguishing Parts of Succession. Likewise for his Justice; which shall prey upon the Sinner for ever, satisfying itself by a perpetual Miracle, rendering the



Creature immortal in the Midst of Flames; always consuming, but never consumed. With the like Wonders we may entertain our Speculations from his Mercy; his beloved, his triumphant Attribute, if it were possible, Something more than infinite; for even his Justice is so, and his Mercy transcends that. Lastly, we may contemplate his supernatural, astonishing Works; particularly in the Resurrection, and Reparation of the same numerical Body, by a Re-union of all the scattered Parts, to be at length disposed of into an Estate of eternal Woe or Bliss; as also the Greatness and Strangeness of the beatific Vision; how a created Eye should be so fortify'd, as to bear all those Glories that stream from the Fountain of uncreated Light, the meanest Expression of which Light is, that it is unexpressible. Now what great and high Objects are these, for a rational Contemplation to busy itself upon? Heights that scorn the Reach of our Prospect; and Depths in which the tallest Reason will never touch the Bottom: Yet surely the Pleasure arising from thence is great and noble; forasmuch as they afford perpetual Matter and Employment to the Inquisitiveness of human Reason; and so are large enough for it to take its full Scope and Range in: Which when it has suck'd and drain'd the utmost of an Object, naturally lays it aside, and neglects it as a dry and empty Thing.

(2.) As the Things belonging to Religion entertain our Speculation with great Objects, so they entertain it also with new: And Novelty we know is the great Parent of Pleasure; upon which Account it is that Men are so much pleased with Variety, and Variety is Nothing else but a continued Novelty. The *Athenians*, who were the professed and most diligent Improvers of their Reason, made it their

their whole Business to hear or tell some new Thing : For the Truth is, Newness especially in great Matters, was a worthy Entertainment for a searching Mind ; it was (as I may so say) an high Taste, fit for the Relish of an *Athenian* Reason. And thereupon the mere unheard of Strangeness of *Jesus* and the Resurrection, made them desirous to hear it discoursed of to them again, *Acts* xvii. 23. But how would it have employed their searching Faculties, had the Mystery of the Trinity, and the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the whole *Oeconomy* of Man's Redemption been explained to them ? For how could it ever enter into the Thoughts of Reason, that a Satisfaction could be paid to an infinite Justice ? Or, that two Natures so unconceivably different, as the Human and Divine, could unite into one Person ? The Knowledge of these Things could derive from Nothing else but pure Revelation ; and consequently must be purely *New* to the highest Discourses of mere Nature. Now that the Newness of an Object so exceedingly pleases and strikes the Mind, appears from this one Consideration ; that every Thing pleases more in Expectation than Fruition : And Expectation supposes a Thing as yet new, the hoped-for Discovery of which is the Pleasure that entertains the expecting, and enquiring Mind : Whereas actual Discovery (as it were) ruffles and deflowers the Newness and Freshness of the Object, and so for the most Part makes it cheap, familiar, and contemptible.

It is clear therefore, that, if there be any Pleasure to the Mind from Speculation, and if this Pleasure of Speculation be advanced by the Greatness and Newness of the Things contemplated, all this is to be found in the Ways of Religion.

2. IN the next Place, Religion is a Pleasure to the Mind, as it respects Practice, and so sustains the Name of Conscience. And Conscience undoubtedly is the great Repository and Magazine of all those Pleasures that can afford any solid Refreshment to the Soul. For when this is calm and serene, then properly a Man enjoys all Things, and what is more, himself; for that he must do, before he can enjoy any Thing else. But it is only a pious Life, led exactly by the Rules of Religion, that can authorize a Man's Conscience to speak comfortably to him: It is this that must word the Sentence, before the Conscience can pronounce it, and then it will do it with Majesty and Authority: It will not whisper, but proclaim a *Jubilee* to the Mind; it will not drop, but pour in Oil upon the wounded Heart. And is there any Pleasure comparable to that which springs from hence? The Pleasure of Conscience is not only greater than all other Pleasures, but may also serve instead of them: For they only please and affect the Mind *in transitu*, in the pitiful narrow Compass of actual Fruition; whereas that of Conscience entertains and feeds it a long Time after with durable, lasting Reflections.

AND thus much for the first ennobling Property of the Pleasure belonging to Religion; namely, That it is the Pleasure of the Mind, and that both as it relates to Speculation, and is called the Understanding, and as it relates to Practice, and is called the Conscience.

II. THE second ennobling Property of it is, That it is such a Pleasure as never satiates or wears; for it properly affects the Spirit, and a Spirit feels no Weariness, as being privileged from the Causes of it. But can the Epicure say so of any of the

the Pleasures that he so much doats upon? Do they not expire, while they satisfy? And after a few Minutes Refreshment, determine in Loathing and Unquietness? How short is the Interval between a Pleasure and a Burden? How undiscernible the Transition from one to the other? Pleasure dwells no longer upon the Appetite, than the Necessities of Nature, which are quickly and easily provided for; and then all that follows, is a Load and Oppression. Every Morsel to a satisfied Hunger, is only a new Labour to a tired Digestion. Every Draught to him that has quenched his Thirst, is but a farther Quenching of Nature, a Provision for Rheum and Diseases, a Drowning of the Quickness and Activity of the Spirits.

HE that prolongs his Meals, and sacrifices his Time, as well as his other Conveniences, to his Luxury, how quickly does he out-fit his Pleasure? And then, how is all the following Time bestowed upon Ceremony and Surfeit? 'till at length, after a long Fatigue of Eating, and Drinking, and Babbling, he concludes the great Work of Dining genteelly, and so makes a Shift to rise from Table, that he may lie down upon his Bed; where, after he has slept himself into some Use of himself, by much ado he staggers to his Table again, and there acts over the same brutish Scene: So that he passes his whole Life in a dozed Condition, between Sleeping and Waking, with a Kind of Drowsiness and Confusion upon his Senses; which, what Pleasure it can be, is hard to conceive; all that is of it, dwells upon the Tip of his Tongue, and within the Compass of his Palate: A worthy Prize for a Man to purchase with the Loss of his Time, his Reason, and himself.

NOR



NOR is that Man less deceived, that thinks to maintain a constant Tenor of Pleasure, by a continual Pursuit of Sports and Recreations.

THE most voluptuous and loose Person breathing, were he but tied to follow his Hawks, and his Hounds, his Dice, and his Courtships every Day, would find it the greatest Torment and Calamity that could befall him; he would fly to the *Mines* and the *Galleys* for his Recreation, and to the *Spade* and the *Mattock* for a Diversion from the Misery of a continual unintermitted Pleasure.

BUT on the contrary, the Providence of God has so ordered the Course of Things, that there is no Action, the Usefulness of which has made it the Matter of Duty, and of a Profession, but a Man may bear the continual Pursuit of it, without Loathing and Satiety. The same Shop and Trade, that employs a Man in his Youth, employs him also in his Age. Every Morning he rises fresh to his Hammer and his Anvil; he passes the Day singing; Custom has naturalized his Labour to him; his Shop is his Element, and he cannot with any Enjoyment of himself live out of it: Whereas no Custom can make the Painfulness of a Debauch easy, or pleasing to a Man; since nothing can be pleasant that is unnatural. But now, if God has interwoven such a Pleasure with the Works of our ordinary Calling; how much superior and more refined must that be, that arises from the Survey of a pious and well-govern'd Life? Surely, as much as Christianity is nobler than a Trade.

AND then, for the constant Freshness of it; it is such a Pleasure as can never cloy or over-work the Mind: For, surely no Man was ever weary of

*Thinking,*

*Thinking*, much less that he had done well or virtuously, that he had conquered such and such a Temptation, or offered Violence to any of his exorbitant Desires. This is a Delight that grows and improves under Thought and Reflection: And while it exercises, does also endear itself to the Mind; at the same Time employing and enflaming the Meditations. All Pleasures that affect the Body, must needs weary, because they transport; and all Transportation is a Violence, and no Violence can be lasting, but determines upon the falling of the Spirits, which are not able to keep up that Height of Motion that the Pleasure of the Senses raises them to: And therefore how inevitably does an immoderate Laughter end in a Sigh? Which is only Nature's recovering itself after a Force done to it. But the religious Pleasure of a well-disposed Mind moves gently, and therefore constantly: It does not affect by Rapture and Extacy; but is like the Pleasure of Health, which is still and sober, yet greater and stronger than those that *call up* the Senses and grosser and more affecting Impressions. God has given no Man a Body as strong as his Appetites; but has corrected the Boundlessness of his voluptuous Desires, by stinting his Strength, and contracting his Capacities.

BUT to look upon those Pleasures also, that have an higher Object than the Body; as those that spring from Honour and Grandeur of Condition; yet we shall find, that even these are not so fresh and constant, but the Mind can nauseate them, and quickly feel the Thinness of a popular Breath. Those that are so fond of Applause while they pursue it, how little do they taste it when they have it? Like Lightning, it only flashes upon the Face, and is gone, and it is well if it does not hurt the Man.

But

But for Greatness of Place, though it is fit and necessary, that some Persons in the World should be in Love with a splendid Servitude; yet certainly they must be much beholden to their own Fancy, that they can be pleased at it: For he that rises up early, and goes to Bed late, only to receive Addresses, to read and answer Petitions, is really as much tied and abridged in his Freedom, as he that waits all that Time to present one. And what Pleasure can it be to be incumbered with Dependencies, thronged and surrounded with Petitioners? And those perhaps sometimes all Suitors for the same Thing; whereupon all but one will be sure to depart grumbling, because they miss of what they think their Due; and even that *one* scarce thankful, because he thinks he has no more than his Due. In a Word, if it is a Pleasure to be envied and shot at, to be maligned *standing*, and to be despised *falling*, to endeavour that which is impossible, which is to please all, and to suffer for not doing it; then is it a Pleasure to be great, and to be able to dispose of Mens Fortunes and Preferments.

BUT farther, to proceed from hence to yet an higher Degree of Pleasure, indeed the highest on this Side that of Religion; which is the Pleasure of Friendship and Conversation. Friendship must confessedly be allowed the Top, the Flower, and Crown of all temporal Enjoyments. Yet has not this also its Flaws, and its dark Side? For is not my Friend a Man; and is not Friendship subject to the same Mortality and Change that Men are? And in Case a Man loves, and is not loved again, does he not think that he has Cause to hate as heartily, and ten Times more eagerly than ever he loved? And then to *be* an Enemy, and once to *have been* a Friend, does it not embitter the Rupture, and aggravate the Calamity? But admitting that  
my

my Friend continues so to the End; yet in the mean Time, is he all Perfection, all Virtue, all Discretion? Has he no *Humours* to be endured, as well as *Kindnesses* to be enjoyed? And am I sure to smell the Rose, without sometimes feeling the Thorn?

AND then, *lastly*, for Company; though it may relieve a Man from his Melancholy, yet it cannot secure him from his Conscience, nor from sometimes being alone. And what is all that a Man enjoys from a Week's, a Month's, or a Year's Converse, comparable to what he feels for one Hour, when his Conscience shall take him aside, and rate him by himself?

IN short, run over the whole Circle of all earthly Pleasures, and I dare affirm, that had not God secured a Man a solid Pleasure from his own Actions, after he had rolled from one to another, and enjoyed them all, he would be forced to complain, that either they were not indeed Pleasures, or that Pleasure was not Satisfaction.

III. THE third ennobling Property of the Pleasure that accrues to a Man from Religion, is, that it is such an one as is in No-body's Power, but only in his that has it; so that he who has the Property, may be also sure of the Perpetuity. And tell me so of any outward Enjoyment, that Mortality is capable of. We are generally at the Mercy of Mens Rapine, Avarice, and Violence, whether we shall be happy or no. For if I build my Felicity upon my Estate or Reputation, I am happy as long as the Tyrant or the Railer will give me Leave to be so. But when my Concernment takes up no more Room or Compass than myself, then so long as I know where to breathe, and to exist, I know



also where to be happy: For I know I may be so in my own Breast, in the Court of my own Conscience; where, if I can but prevail with myself *to be innocent*, I need bribe neither Judge nor Officer to be *pronounced* so. The Pleasure of the religious Man, is an easy and portable Pleasure, such an one as he carries about in his Bosom, without alarming either the Eye or Envy of the World. A Man putting all his Pleasures into this one, is like a Traveller's putting all his Goods into one Jewel; the Value is the same, and the Convenience greater.

THERE is Nothing that can raise a Man to that generous Absoluteness of Condition, as neither to cringe, to fawn, or to depend meanly; but that which gives him that Happiness within himself, for which Men depend upon others. For surely I need salute no great Man's Threshold, sneak to none of his Friends or Servants to speak a good Word for me to my Conscience. It is a noble and a sure Defiance of a great Malice, backed with a great Interest; which yet can have no Advantage of a Man, but from his own Expectations of something that is without himself. But if I can make my Duty my Delight; if I can feast, and please, and caress my Mind with the Pleasures of worthy Speculations, or virtuous Practices; let Greatness and Malice vex and abridge me if they can: My Pleasures are as free as my Will; no more to be controlled than my Choice, or the unlimited Range of my Thoughts and my Desires.

NOR is this Kind of Pleasure only out of the Reach of any outward Violence, but even those Things also that make a much closer Impression upon us, which are the irresistable Decays of Nature, have yet no Influence at all upon this. For when Age itself, which of all Things in the World  
will

will not be baffled or defied, shall begin to arrest, seize, and remind us of our Mortality, by Pains, Achs, Deadness of Limbs, and Dulness of Senses; yet then the Pleasure of the Mind shall be in its full Youth, Vigour, and Freshness: A Palsy may as well shake an Oak, or a Fever dry up a Fountain, as either of them shake, dry up, or impair the Delight of Conscience. For it lies within, it centers in the Heart, it grows into the very Substance of the Soul, so that it accompanies a Man to his Grave; he never out-lives it, and that for this Cause only, because he cannot out-live himself.

AND thus I have endeavoured to describe the Excellency of that *Pleasure* that is to be found in the *Ways* of a *religious Wisdom*, by those excellent Properties that attend it; which whether they reach the Description that has been given them, or no, every Man may convince himself, by the best of Demonstrations, which is his own Trial.

Now, from all this Discourse, this I am sure is a most natural and direct Consequence, that if the *Ways of Religion* are *Ways of Pleasantness*, that such as are not *Ways of Pleasantness* are not truly and properly *Ways of Religion*. Upon which Ground it is easy to see what Judgment is to be passed upon all those affected, uncommanded, absurd Austerities, so much prized and exercised by some of the *Romish* Profession. Pilgrimages, going bare-foot, Hair-shirts, and Whips, with other such Gospel Artillery, are their only Helps to Devotion: Things never enjoined, either by the Prophets under the *Jewish*, or by the Apostles under the Christian Economy; who yet surely understood the proper, and the most efficacious Instruments of Piety, as well as any Confessor or Friar of all the Order of *St. Francis*, or any Casuist whatsoever.

IT seems, that with them, a Man sometimes cannot be a Penitent, unless he also turns Vagabond, and foots it to *Jerusalem*, or wanders over this or that Part of the World to visit the Shrine of such or such a pretended Saint, though perhaps in his Life ten Times more ridiculous than themselves: Thus, that which was *Cain's Curse*, is become their Religion. He that thinks to expiate a Sin by going bare-foot, only makes one Folly the Atonement for another. *Paul* indeed was scourged and beaten by the *Jews*, but we never read that he beat or scourged himself: And if they think that *his keeping under his Body* imports so much, they must first prove, that the Body cannot be kept under by a virtuous Mind, and that the Mind cannot be made virtuous but by a Scourge; and consequently, that *Thongs and Whipcord* are Means of Grace, and Things necessary to Salvation. The Truth is, if Mens Religion lies no deeper than their Skin, it is possible that they may scourge themselves into very great Improvements.

BUT they will find that *bodily Exercise* touches not the Soul; and that neither Pride, nor Lust, nor Covetousness, nor any other Vice was ever mortified by corporal Disciplines: It is not the Back, but the Heart that must bleed for Sin: And consequently, that in this whole Course they are like Men out of their Way; let them lash on never so fast, they are not at all the nearer to their Journey's End: And howsoever they deceive themselves and others, they may as well expect to bring a Cart, as a Soul to Heaven by such Means. What Arguments they have to beguile poor, simple, unstable Souls with, I know not; but surely the practical, casuistical, that is, the principal Part of their Religion favours very little of Spirituality.

AND



AND now upon the Result of all, I suppose, that to exhort Men to be religious, is only in other Words to exhort them to take their Pleasure. A Pleasure high, rational, and angelical; a Pleasure embased with no appendent Sting, no consequent Loathing, no Remorses or bitter Farewells: But such an one, as being Honey in the Mouth, never turns to Gall or Gravel in the Belly. A Pleasure made for the Soul, and the Soul for that; suitable to its Spirituality, and equal to all its Capacities. Such an one as grows fresher upon Enjoyment, and though continually fed upon, yet is never devoured. A Pleasure that a Man may call as properly his own, as his Soul and his Conscience; neither liable to Accident, nor exposed to Injury. It is the Foretaste of Heaven, and the Earnest of Eternity. In a Word, it is such an one, as being begun in Grace, passes into Glory, Blessedness, and Immortality, and those Pleasures *that neither Eye has seen, nor Ear heard, nor has it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive.*

ARISTOTELIS  
C3 SER.



And now upon the Relate of all I suppose, that to exhort Men to be religious, is only in other



embellish with no apparent sing, no consistent Location, no Remembrance or bitter Farewells: But each an one, as being Honey in the Mouth, never

## S E R M O N II.

to the Spirituality, and equal to all its Capacities. And as one grows fainter upon Enquiry, and



A Pleasure that a Man may call as property his own, as his Soul, and his Mind, whether able to

GEN. i. 27.

Accident, not exposed to Injury. It is the Force

*So GOD created Man in his own Image, in the Image of GOD created He him.*

And that Pleasure that a Man may call as property his own, as his Soul, and his Mind, whether able to

**H**OW hard it is for natural Reason to discover a Creation before revealed, or being revealed to believe it, the strange Opinions of the old Philosophers and the Infidelity of modern Atheists, is too sad a Demonstration. To run the World back to its first Original and Infancy, and (as it were) to view Nature in its Cradle, and trace the Out-goings of the Ancient of Days in the first Instance of his creative Power, is a Research too great for any mortal Enquiry: And we might continue our Scrutiny to the End of the World, before natural Reason would be able to find out when it begun.

EPICURUS his Discourse concerning the Original of the World is so ridiculous, that we may well judge the Design of his Philosophy to have been Pleasure, and not Instruction.

ARISTOTLE

**ARISTOTLE** held, that it streamed by natural Result from God, the infinite and eternal Mind, as the Light issues from the Sun; so that there was no Instant of Duration assignable of God's eternal Existence, in which the World did not also coexist.

**I. OTHERS** held a fortuitous Concourse of Atoms; but all seem jointly to explode a Creation; still beating upon this Ground, that the producing Something out of Nothing is impossible and incomprehensible: Incomprehensible indeed I grant, but not therefore impossible. There is not the least Transaction of Sense and Motion in the whole Man, but Philosophers are at a Loss to comprehend, I am sure they are to explain it. Wherefore it is not always rational to measure the Truth of an Assertion by the Standard of our Apprehension.

BUT to bring Things even to the bare Perceptions of Reason, I appeal to any one, who shall impartially reflect upon the Conceptions of his own Mind, whether he doth not find it as easy and suitable to his natural Notions, to conceive that an Infinite Almighty Power might produce a Thing out of Nothing, and make that to exist which did not exist before; as to conceive the World to have had no Beginning, but to have existed from Eternity: Which, were it so proper for this Place, I could easily demonstrate to be attended with no small Train of Absurdities.

IN this Chapter, we have GOD surveying the Works of the Creation, and leaving this general Impress upon them, that they were exceeding good. What an Omnipotence wrought, we have an Omniscience to approve. But as it is reasonable to imagine that there is more of Design, and consequently

quently more of Perfection, in the last Work, we have God here giving his last Stroke, and summing up all into Man, the Universe into an Individual; So that whereas in other Creatures we have but the Trace of his Footsteps, in Man we have the Draught of his Hand. In Him were united all the scattered Perfections of the Creature, all the Graces and Ornaments; all the Airs and Features of Being, were abridged into this small, yet full System of Nature and Divinity: As we might well imagine that the great Artificer would be more than ordinarily exact in drawing his own Picture.

THE Work that I shall undertake from these Words, shall be to shew what this Image of God in Man is, and wherein it doth consist. Which I shall do these two Ways:

1. NEGATIVELY, by shewing wherein it *doth not* consist.

2. POSITIVELY, by shewing wherein it *does*.

FOR the first of these, we are to remove the erroneous Opinion of the *Socinians*. They deny that the Image of God consisted in any habitual Perfections that adorned the Soul of *Adam*: But as to his Understanding bring him in void of all Notion, a rude unwritten Blank; making him to be created as much an Infant as others are born; sent into the World only to read and spell out a God in the Works of Creation, to learn by Degrees, 'till at length his Understanding grew up to the Stature of his Body. Also without any Habits of Virtue in his Will; thus divesting him of all, and stripping him to his bare Essence: So that all the Perfection they allowed his Understanding



was Aptness and Docility; and all that they attributed to his Will was a Possibility to be virtuous.

BUT wherein then according to their Opinion did this Image of GOD consist? Why, in that Power and Dominion that GOD gave *Adam* over the Creatures: In that he was vouched His immediate Deputy upon Earth, the Viceroy of the Creation, and Lord-lieutenant of the World. But that this Power and Dominion is not adequately the Image of GOD, but only a Part of it, is clear from hence; because then he that had most of this, would have most of GOD's Image: And consequently *Nimrod* had more of it than *Noah*, *Saul* than *Samuel*, the Persecutors than the Martyrs, and *Cæsar* than *Christ* Himself, which to assert is a blasphemous Paradox. And if the Image of GOD is only Grandeur, Power, and Sovereignty, certainly we have been hitherto much mistaken in our Duty: And hereafter are by all Means to beware of making ourselves unlike GOD, by too much Self-denial and Humility.

WE are in the next Place to lay down positively what this Image of GOD in Man is. It is in short, *That universal Reëtitude of all the Faculties of the Soul, by which they stand apt and disposed to their respective Offices and Operations:* Which will be more fully set forth, by taking a distinct Survey of it, in the several Faculties belonging to the Soul.

I. IN the Understanding.

II. IN the Will,

III. IN the Passions or Affections.

I. AND



I. AND first for its noblest Faculty, the Understanding: It was then sublime, clear, and aspiring, and, as it were, the Soul's upper Region, lofty and serene, free from the Vapours and Disturbances of the inferior Affections. It was the leading, controlling Faculty; all the Passions wore the Colours of Reason. Discourse was then almost as quick as Intuition; it was nimble in proposing, firm in concluding; it could sooner determine than now it can dispute. Like the Sun, it had both Light and Agility; it knew no Rest, but in Motion; no Quiet, but in Activity. It did not so properly apprehend, as irradiate the Object; not so much find, as make Things intelligible. It did arbitrate upon the several Reports of Sense, and all the Varieties of Imagination; not like a drowsy Judge, only hearing, but also directing their Verdict. In Sum, it was vegete, quick, and lively; open as the Day, untainted as the Morning, full of the Innocence and Spriteliness of Youth; it gave the Soul a bright and a full View into all Things; and was not only a Window, but itself the Prospect.

Now as there are two great Functions of the the Soul, *Contemplation* and *Practice*, according to that general Division of Objects, some of which only entertain our Speculation, others also employ our Actions; so the Understanding with Relation to these, not because of any Distinction in the Faculty itself, is accordingly divided into speculative and practick; in both of which the Image of God was then apparent.

I. FOR the Understanding speculative. There are some general Maxims in the Mind of Man, which are the Rules of Discourse, and the Basis of all Philosophy. As that *the same Thing cannot at*

the same Time be, and not be. That the Whole is bigger than a Part.

Now it was *Adam's* Happiness in the State of Innocence to have these clear and unfullied. He came into the World a Philosopher, which sufficiently appeared by his writing the Nature of Things upon their Names; he could view Essences in themselves, and read Forms without the Comment of their respective Properties: He could see Consequents yet dormant in their Principles, and Effects yet unborn and in the Womb of their Causes; his Understanding could almost pierce into future Contingents; his Conjectures improving even into Prophecy, or the Certainties of Prediction; till his Fall he was ignorant of nothing but of Sin; or at least it rested in the Notion, without the Smart of the Experiment. Could any Difficulty have been proposed, the Resolution would have been as early as the Proposal; it could not have had Time to settle into Doubt. The Issue of all his Enquires was the Off-spring of his Brain, without the Sweat of his Brow. Study was not then a Duty, Night-watchings were needless; the Light of Reason wanted not the Assistance of a Candle. This is the Doom of fallen Man, to labour in the Fire, to seek Truth *in profundo*, to exhaust his Time and impair his Health, and perhaps to spin out his Days, and himself into one pitiful controverted Conclusion. There was then no Poring, no Struggling with Memory, no Straining for Invention: His Faculties were quick and expedite; they answered without Knocking, they were ready upon the first Summons, there was Freedom, and Firmness in all their Operations. I confess, it is as difficult for us, who date our Ignorance from our first Being, and were still bred up with the same Infirmities about us, with which we

we were born, to raise our Thoughts to those intellectual Perfections that attend our Nature in the Time of Innocence; as it is for a Peasant bred up in the Obscurities of a Cottage, to fancy in his Mind the unseen Splendors of a Court. But we may collect the Excellency of the Understanding then, by the glorious Remainders of it now, and guess at the Stateliness of the Building, by the Magnificence of its Ruins. All those Arts, Rarities, and Inventions, which vulgar Minds gaze at, the Ingenious pursue, and all admire, are but the Relicks of an Intellect defaced with Sin and Time. We admire it now, only as Antiquaries do a Piece of old Coin, for the Stamp it once bore, and not for those vanishing Lineaments and disappearing Draughts that remain upon it at present. And certainly, that must needs have been very glorious, the Decays of which are so admirable. He that is comely, when old and decrepit, surely was very beautiful when he was young. An *Aristotle* was but the Rubbish of an *Adam*, and *Athens* but the Rudiments of *Paradise*.

2. THE Image of GOD was no less resplendent in that, which we call Man's practical Understanding; namely, that Store-house of the Soul, in which are treasured up the Rules of Action, and the Seeds of Morality. Now of this Sort are these Maxims; That GOD is to be worshipped: That Parents are to be honoured: That a Man's Word is to be kept, and the like; which, being of universal Influence, as to the Regulation of the Behaviour and Converse of Mankind, are the Ground of all Virtue and Civility, and the Foundation of Religion.



It was the Privilege of *Adam* innocent, to have these Notions also firm and untainted, to carry his Monitor in his Bosom, his Law in his Heart, and to have such a Conscience as might be its own Casuist: And certainly those Actions must needs be regular, where there is an Identity between the Rule and the Faculty. His own Mind taught him a due Dependence upon God, and chalked out to him the just Proportions and Measures of Behaviour to his Fellow-Creatures. He had no Catechism but the Creation, needed no Study but Reflection, read no Book but the Volume of the World, and that too, not for Rules to work by, but for the Objects to work upon. The Decalogue of *Moses* was but a Transcript, not an Original. All the Laws of Nations, and wise Decrees of States, the Statutes of *Solon*, and the twelve Tables, were but a Paraphrase upon this standing Rectitude of Nature, this fruitful Principle of Justice, that was ready to run out, and enlarge itself into suitable Determinations, upon all emergent Objects and Occasions. Justice then was neither blind to discern, nor lame to execute. It was not subject to be imposed upon by a deluded Fancy, nor yet to be bribed by a glozing Appetite, to turn the Balance to a false or dishonest Sentence. In all its Directions of the inferior Faculties, it conveyed its Suggestions with Clearness, and enjoined them with Power; it had the Passions in perfect Subjection; and tho' its Command over them was but suasive, yet it had the Force of absolute. It was not then, as it is now, where the Conscience has only Power to disapprove, and to protest against the Exorbitances of the Passions; and rather to wish, than make them otherwise. The Voice of Conscience now is low and weak, chastising the Passions, as old *Eli* did his domineering Sons; *Not so, my Sons, not so: But the*



Voice of Conscience then, was not, this should, or this ought to be done; but this must, this shall be done. It spoke like a Legislator; the Thing spoke was a Law: And the Manner of speaking it a new Obligation. In short, there was as great a Disparity between the practical Dictates of the Understanding then, and now, as there is between Empire and Advice, Counsel and Command, between a Companion and a Governor.

AND thus much for the Image of GOD as it shone in Man's Understanding.

II. LET us in the next Place take a View of it, as it was stamped upon the Will. And doubtless the Will of Man, in the State of Innocence, had an entire Freedom, a perfect Equipendency and Indifference to either Part of the Contradiction, to stand, or not to stand, to accept, or not accept the Temptation. I will grant the Will of Man now to be as much a Slave as any one will have it, and to be only free to sin; that is, instead of a Liberty, to have only a Licentiousness; yet certainly this is not Nature. We are not made crooked; we learnt these Windings and Turnings of the Serpent: And therefore it cannot but be a blasphemous Piece of Ingratitude to ascribe them to GOD, and to make the Plague of our Nature the Condition of our Creation.

THE Will was then ductile and pliant to all the Motions of right Reason, it met the Dictates of a clarified Understanding half Way. And the active Informations of the Intellect, filling the passive Reception of the Will, like Form closing with Matter, grew into a third and distinct Perfection of Practice: The Understanding and Will never disagreed; for the Proposals of the one never thwarted

thwarted the Inclinations of the other. Yet neither did the Will servilely attend upon the Understanding, but as a Favourite does upon his Prince, where the Service is Privilege and Preferment; or as *Solomon's* Servants waited upon him, it admired its Wisdom, and heard its prudent Dictates and Counsels, both the Direction and the Reward of its Obedience. It is indeed the Nature of this Faculty to follow a superior Guide, to be drawn by the Intellect; but then it was drawn, as a triumphant Chariot, which at the same Time both follows and triumphs; while it obeyed this, it commanded the other Faculties. It was subordinate, not enslaved to the Understanding: Not as a Servant to a Master, but as a Queen to her King, who both acknowledges a Superiority, and yet retains a Majesty.

PASS we downward from Man's Intellect and Will,

III. To the Passions. That these are not evil in themselves, appears hence, That our Saviour *Christ*, who took upon Him all our natural Infirmities, but none of our sinful, has been seen to weep, to be sorrowful, to pity, and to be angry: Which shews that there might be Gall in a Dove, Passion without Sin, Fire without Smoke, and Motion without Disturbance. For it is not bare Agitation, but the Sediment at the Bottom, that troubles and defiles the Water: And when we see it windy and dusty, the Wind does not (as we use to say) make, but only raise a Dust.

ISHALL consider only the principal Passions, from whence we may take an Estimate of the rest.

AND first, for the grand leading Affection, which is Love. This is the great Instrument and Engine of Nature, the Bond and Cement of Society, the Spring and Spirit of the Universe. Love is such an Affection, as cannot so properly be said to be in the Soul, as the Soul to be in that. It is the whole Man wrapt up into one Desire; all the Powers, Vigour and Faculties of the Soul abridged into one Inclination. And it is of that active, restless Nature, that it must of Necessity exert itself; and like the Fire, to which it is so often compared, it is not a free Agent, to chuse whether it will heat or no, but it streams forth by natural Results, and unavoidable Emanations. So that it will fasten upon an inferior, unsuitable Object, rather than none at all. The Soul may sooner leave off to subsist, than to love; and, like the Vine, it withers and dies, if it has nothing to embrace. Now this Affection in the State of Innocence was happily pitched upon its right Object; it flamed up in direct Fervours of Devotion to God, and in collateral Emissions of Charity to its Neighbour. It was not then only another and more cleanly Name for Lust. It had none of those impure Heats, that both represent and deserve Hell. It was a Vestal and a Virgin Fire, and differed as much from that, which usually passes by this Name now, as the vital Heat from the Burning of a Fever.

THEN, for the contrary Passion of Hatred. This, we know, is the Passion of Defiance, and there is a Kind of Aversion and Hostility included in its very Essence. But then, (if there could have been Hatred in the World, when there was scarce any Thing odious) it would have acted within the Compass of its proper Object. Like Aloes, bitter indeed, but wholesome. There would have been



no Rancour, no Hatred of our Brother : An innocent Nature could hate nothing that was innocent. In a Word, so great is the Commutation, that the Soul then hated only that, which now only it loves, that is, Sin.

AND if we may bring Anger under this Head, as being, according to some, a transient Hatred, or at least very like it : This also, as unruly as now it is, yet then vented itself by the Measures of Reason. There was no such Things as the Transports of Malice, or the Violences of Revenge : No rendering Evil for Evil, when Evil was truly a Non-entity, and no where to be found. Anger then was like the Sword of Justice, keen, but innocent and righteous : It did not act like Fury, then call itself Zeal. It always espoused God's Honour, and never kindled upon any Thing but in order to a Sacrifice. It sparkled like the Coal upon the Altar, with the Fervours of Piety, the Heats of Devotion, the Sallies and Vibrations of an harmless Activity. In the next Place, for the lightsome Passion of Joy. It was not that, which now often usurps this Name ; that trivial, vanishing, superficial Thing, that only gilds the Apprehension, and plays upon the Surface of the Soul. It was not the mere Crackling of Thorns, a sudden Blaze of the Spirits, the Exultation of a tickled Fancy, or a pleased Appetite. Joy was then a masculine and a severe Thing ; the Recreation of the Judgment, the Jubilee of Reason. It was the Result of a real Good suitably applied. It commenced upon the Solidities of Truth, and the Substance of Fruition. It did not run out in Voice, or indecent Eruptions, but filled the Soul, as God does the Universe, silently and without Noise. It was refreshing, but composed ; like the Pleasantness of Youth tempered with the Gravity of Age ;



or the Mirth of a Festival managed with the Silence of Contemplation.

AND, on the other Side, for Sorrow. Had any Loss or Disaster made but Room for Grief, it would have moved according to the severe Allowances of Prudence, and the Proportions of the Provocation. It would not have sallied out into Complaint or Loudness, nor spread itself upon the Face, and writ sad Stories upon the Forehead. No wringing of the Hands, knocking the Breast, or wishing one's Self unborn; all which are but the Ceremonies of Sorrow, the Pomp and Ostentation of an effeminate Grief: Which speak not so much the Greatness of the Misery, as the Smallness of the Mind. Tears may spoil the Eyes, but not wash away the Affliction. Sighs may exhaust the Man, but not eject the Burden. Sorrow then would have been as silent as Thought, as severe as Philosophy. It would have rested in inward Senses, tacit Dislikes: And the whole Scene of it been transacted in sad and silent Reflections.

THEN again for Hope. Though indeed the Fulness and Affluence of Man's Enjoyments in the State of Innocence, might seem to leave no Place for Hope, in respect of any farther Addition, but only of the Continuance of what already he possessed: Yet doubtless, GOD, who made no Faculty, but also provided it with a proper Object, did then exercise Man's Hopes with the Expectations of a better Paradise, or a more intimate Admission to Himself. For it is not imaginable, that *Adam* could fix upon such poor, thin Enjoyments, as Riches, Pleasure, and the Gayeties of an animal Life. Hope indeed was always the Anchor of the Soul, yet certainly it was not to catch or fasten upon such Mud. And if, as the Apostle says

says, *no Man hopes for that which he sees*, much less could *Adam* then hope for such Things as he saw through.

AND lastly, for the Affection of Fear. It was then the Instrument of Caution, not of Anxiety; a Guard, and not a Torment to the Breast that had it. It is now indeed an Unhappiness, the Disease of the Soul: It flies from a Shadow, and makes more Dangers than it avoids: It weakens the Judgment, and betrays the Succours of Reason: So hard is it to tremble, and not to err, and to hit the Mark with a shaking Hand. Then it fixed upon Him who is only to be feared, GOD: And yet with a filial Fear, which at the same Time both fears and loves. It was Awe without Amazement, Dread without Distraction. There was then Beauty even in this very Paleness. It was the Colour of Devotion, giving a Lustre to Reverence, and a Gloss to Humanity.

THUS did the Passions then act without any of their present Jars, Combats, or Repugnances; all moving with the Beauty of Uniformity, and the Stillness of Composure. Like a well-governed Army, not for Fighting, but for Rank and Order. I confess the Scripture does not expressly attribute these several Endowments to *Adam* in his first Estate. But all that I have said, and much more, may be drawn out of that short Aphorism, *GOD made Man upright*, Eccl. vii. 29. And since the opposite Weaknesses now infest the Nature of Man fallen, if we will be true to the Rule of Contraries, we must conclude, that those Perfections were the Lot of Man innocent.

Now from this so exact and regular Composure of the Faculties, all moving in their due Place,  
each

each striking in its proper Time, there arose, by natural Consequence, the crowning Perfection of all, *a good Conscience*. For, as in the Body, when the principal Parts, as the Heart and Liver, do their Offices, and all the smaller Vessels act orderly and duly, there arises a sweet Enjoyment upon the Whole, which we call *Health*: So in the Soul, when the supreme Faculties of the Will and Understanding move regularly, the inferior Passions and Affections following, there arises a Serenity and Complacency upon the whole Soul, infinitely beyond the greatest bodily Pleasures, the highest Quintessence of worldly Delights. There is in this Case a Kind of Fragrancy, and spiritual Perfume upon the Conscience; much like what *Isaac* spoke of his Son's Garments; *That the Scent of them was like the Smell of a Field which the LORD had blessed*. Such a Freshness and Flavour is there upon the Soul, when daily watered with the Actions of a virtuous Life. Whatsoever is pure, is also pleasant.

HAVING thus surveyed the Image of GOD in the Soul of Man, we are not to omit now those Characters of Majesty that GOD imprinted upon the Body. He drew some Traces of his Image upon this also; as much as a spiritual Substance could be pictured upon a corporeal. As for the Sect of the *Anthropomorphites*, who from hence ascribe to GOD the Figure of a Man, *Eyes, Hands, Feet*, and the like, they are too ridiculous to deserve a Confutation. They would seem to draw this Impiety from the *Letter* of the Scripture sometimes speaking of GOD in this Manner. Absurdly; as if the Mercy of Scripture-Expressions ought to warrant the Blasphemy of our Opinions. And not rather shew us, that GOD condescends to us, only to draw us to Himself; and cloaths Himself  
in



in our Likeness, only to win us to his own. The Practice of the *Papists* is much of the same Nature, in their absurd and impious Picturing of God Almighty: But the Wonder in them is the less, since the Image of a Deity may be a proper Object for that, which is but the Image of a Religion. But to the Purpose: *Adam* was then no less glorious in his Externals; he had a beautiful Body, as well as an immortal Soul. The whole Compound was like a well-built Temple, stately without, and sacred within. The Elements were at perfect Union and Agreement in his Body; and their contrary Qualities served not for the Dissolution of the Compound, but the Variety of the Composure. *Galen*, who had no more Divinity than what his Physick taught him, barely upon the Consideration of this so exact Frame of the Body, challenges any one upon an hundred Years Study, to find how any the least Fibre, or most minute Particle might be more commodiously placed, either for Use or Comeliness. His Stature erect, and tending upwards to his Center; his Countenance majestick and comely, with the Lustre of a native Beauty, that scorned the poor Assistance of Art; his Body of so much Quickness and Agility, that it did not only contain, but also represent the Soul: For we might well suppose, that where God did deposit so rich a Jewel, he would suitably adorn the Case. It was a fit Work-House for spritely, vivid Faculties to exercise and exert themselves in. A fit Tabernacle for an immortal Soul, not only to dwell in, but to contemplate upon: Where it might see the World without Travel; it being a lesser Scheme of the Creation, Nature contracted, a little Cosmography or Map of the Universe. Neither was the Body then subject to Distempers, to die by Peace-meal, and languish under Coughs, Catarrhs, or Consumptions. *Adam* knew no Disease,



ease, so long as Temperance from the forbidden Fruit secured him. Nature was his Physician; and Innocence and Abstinence would have kept him healthful to Immortality.

Now the Use of this Point might be various, but at present it shall be only this; to remind us of the irreparable Loss that we sustained in our first Parents, to shew us of how fair a Portion *Adam* disinherited his whole Posterity. Take the Picture of a Man in the Vivacity of his Youth, and in the Declensions of his drooping Years, and you will scarce know it to belong to the same Person: There would be more Art to discern, than at first to draw it. The same and greater is the Difference between Man innocent and fallen. He is, as it were, a new Species; the Plague of Sin has even altered his Nature, and eaten into his very Essentials. The Image of God is wiped out, the Creatures have shook off his Yoke, and revolted from his Dominion. Diseases have shattered the excellent Frame of his Body; and, by a new Dispensation, *Immortality is swallowed up of Mortality*. The same Disaster and Decay also has invaded his Spirituall: The Passions rebel, every Faculty would usurp and rule; and there are so many Governors, that there can be no Government. The Light within us is become Darkness; and the Understanding, that should be Eyes to the blind Faculty of the Will, is blind itself, and so brings all the Inconveniences, that attend a blind Follower under the Conduct of a blind Guide. He that would have a clear, ocular Demonstration of this, let him reflect upon that numerous Litter of strange, senseless, absurd Opinions, that crawl about the World, to the Disgrace of Reason, and the unanswerable Reproach of a broken Intellect.

THE two great Perfections, that both adorn, and exercise Man's Understanding, are *Philosophy*, and *Religion*: For the first of these; take it even amongst the Professors of it, where it most flourished, and we shall find the very first Notions of common Sense debauched by them. For there have been such, as have asserted, *That there is no such Thing in the World as Motion: That Contradictions may be true.* There has not been wanting one, that has denied *Snow to be white.* Such a Stupidity or Wantonness had seized upon the most raised Wits, that it might be doubted, whether the Philosophers, or the Owls of *Athens* were the quicker sighted. But then for Religion; What prodigious, monstrous, mishapen Births has the Reason of fallen Men produced! It is now almost Six Thousand Years, that far the greatest Part of the World has had no other Religion but Idolatry: And Idolatry certainly is the first-born of Folly; nay, the very Abridgment and Sum total of all Absurdities. For is it not strange, that a rational Man should worship an Ox, nay, the Image of an Ox? That he should fawn upon his Dog? Bow himself before a Cat? Adore Leeks and Garlick, and shed penitential Tears at the Smell of a deified Onion? Yet so did the *Ægyptians*, once the famed Masters of all Arts and Learning. And to go a little farther; we have yet a strange Instance in *Isa. xlv. 14. A Man hews him down a Tree in the Wood, and part of it he burns, in ver. 16. and in ver. 17. with the Residue thereof he maketh a God.* With one Part he furnishes his Chimney, with the other his Chapel. A strange Thing, that the Fire must first consume this Part, and then burn Incense to that. As if there was more Divinity in one End of the Stick, than in the other; or, as if it could be graved and painted Omnipotent, or the Nails and the Hammer could give it an

an *Apotheosis*. Briefly, so great is the Change, so deplorable the Degradation of our Nature, that, whereas before we bore the Image of God, we now retain only the Image of Men.

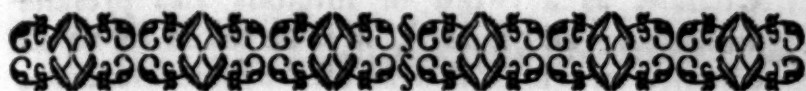
IN the last Place, we learn from hence the Excellency of Christian Religion, in that it is the great and only Means, that God has sanctified and designed to repair the Breaches of Humanity, to set fallen Man upon his Legs again, to clarify his Reason, to rectify his Will, and to compose and regulate his Affections. The whole Business of our Redemption is, in short, only to rub over the defaced Copy of the Creation, to reprint God's Image upon the Soul, and (as it were) to set forth Nature in a second and fairer Edition.

THE Recovery of which lost Image, as it is God's Pleasure to command, and our Duty to endeavour, so it is in his Power only to effect.

*To whom be rendered and ascribed, as is most due, all Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.*

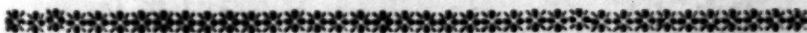






# S E R M O N III.

Preached at *Westminster-Abbey*, Feb. 22,  
1684-5.



PROV. xvi. 33.

*The Lot is cast into the Lap, but the whole  
Disposing of it is of the LORD.*

**I** CANNOT think myself engaged from these Words to discourse of Lots, as to their Nature, Use and Allowableness; but I shall fix only upon the Design of the Words, which seems to be a Declaration of a Divine Perfection by a single Instance; a Proof of the Exactness and Universality of God's Providence from its Influence upon a Thing, of all others, the most casual and fortuitous, such as is the casting of Lots.

A LOT is properly a casual Event, purposely applied to the Determination of some doubtful Thing.



SOME there are, who utterly proscribe the Name of Chance, as a Word of impious and profane Signification; and indeed, if it be taken by us in that Sense, in which it was used by the Heathen, so as to make any Thing casual in Respect of God Himself, their Exception ought justly to be admitted. But to say a Thing is a Chance, as it relates to second Causes, is not Profaneness, but a great Truth; as signifying no more, than that there are some Events, besides the Knowledge, Purpose, Expectation and Power of second Agents. And for this very Reason, because they are so, it is the Royal Prerogative of God Himself, to have all these loose, uneven, fickle Uncertainties under his Disposal.

THE Subject therefore, that from hence we are naturally carried to the Consideration of, is, the admiral Extent of the Divine Providence, in managing the most contingent Passages of human Affairs; which that we may the better treat of, we will consider the Result of a-Lot:

### I. IN Reference to Men.

### II. IN Reference to God.

I. FOR the first of these, if we consider it as relating to Men, who suspend the Decission of some dubious Case upon it, so we shall find that it naturally implies these two Things:

1. SOMETHING future. 2. Something contingent.

FROM which two Qualifications, these two Things also follow:

I. THAT

1. THAT it is absolutely out of the Reach of Man's Knowledge.

2. THAT it is equally out of his Power.

THIS is most clear ; for otherwise, why are Men in such Cases doubtful what the Issue and Result should be ? For no Man doubts of what he sees and knows, nor is solicitous about the Event of that which he has in his Power.

THE Light of Man's Understanding is but a short, diminutive, contracted Light, and looks not beyond the present : He knows nothing future, but as it has some Kind of Presence in the constant Manner of Operation belonging to its Cause ; by Virtue of which, we know, that if the Fire continues for twenty Years, it will certainly burn so long ; and that there will be Summer, Winter, and Harvest, in their respective Seasons : But whether God will continue the World 'till To-morrow or no, we cannot know by any certain Argument, either from the Nature of God, or of the World.

BUT when we look upon such Things as relate to their immediate Causes, with a perfect Indifference, so that in Respect of them, they equally may, or may not be ; human Reason can then, at the best, but conjecture what will be. And in some Things, as here in the casting of Lots, a Man cannot, upon any Ground of Reason, bring the Event of them so much as under Conjecture.

The Choice of Man's Will is indeed uncertain, because in many Things free ; but yet there are certain Habits and Principles in the Soul, that have some Kind of Sway upon it, apt to bias it

more one Way than another ; so that, upon the Proposal of an agreeable Object, it may rationally be conjectured, that a Man's Choice will rather incline him to accept than to refuse it. But when Lots are shuffled together in a Lap, Urn, or Pitcher, or a Man blindfold casts a Dye, what Reason in the World can he have to presume that he shall draw a white Stone rather than a black, or throw an Ace rather than a Six ? Now, if these Things are thus out of the Compass of a Man's Knowledge, it will unavoidably follow, that they are also out of his Power. For no Man can govern, or command that which he cannot possibly know ; since to dispose of a Thing, implies both a Knowledge of a Thing to be disposed of, and of the End that it is to be disposed of to.

AND thus we have seen how a contingent Event baffles Man's Knowledge, and evades his Power :

II. LET us now consider the same in Respect of GOD ; and so we shall find that it falls under,

I. A CERTAIN Knowledge. And

2. A DETERMINING Providence.

I. FIRST of all then, the most casual Event of Things, as it stands related to GOD, is comprehended by a certain Knowledge. GOD, by Reason of his eternal, infinite, and indivisible Nature, is, by one single Act of Duration, present to all the successive Portions of Time, and consequently to all Things successively existing in them : Which eternal, indivisible Act of his Existence, makes all Futures actually present to Him.

BUT



BUT I shall not insist upon these Speculations ; which when they are most refined, serve only to shew, how impossible it is for us to have a clear and explicit Notion of that which is infinite. Let it suffice us in general, to acknowledge and adore the vast Compass of GOD's Omniscience, that it is a Light shining into every dark Corner, ripping up all Secrets, and stedfastly grasping the greatest and most slippery Uncertainties. As when we see the Sun shine upon a River, tho' the Waves of it move and roll this Way and that Way by the Wind, yet for all their Unsettledness, the Sun strikes them with a direct and certain Beam. Look upon Things of the most accidental and mutable Nature, accidental in their Production, and mutable in their Continuance ; yet GOD's Prescience of them is as certain in Him, as the Memory of them is or can be in us. He knows which Way the Lot and the Dye shall fall, as perfectly as if they were already cast. All Futurities are naked before that All-seeing Eye, the Sight of which is no more hindered by Distance of Time, than the Sight of an Angel can be determined by Distance of Place.

2. As all Contingencies are comprehended by a certain Divine Knowledge, so they are governed by as certain and steady a Providence.

THERE is no wandering out of the Reach of this, no slipping thro' the Hands of Omnipotence. GOD's Hand is as steady as his Eye, and certainly thus to reduce Contingency to Method, Instability and Chance itself to an unfailing Rule and Order, argues such a Mind as is fit to govern the World ; and I am sure, nothing less than such an one can.

NOW GOD may be said to bring the greatest Casualties under his Providence upon a twofold Account.

(1.) THAT He directs them to a certain End.

(2.) OFTEN to very weighty and great Ends.

(1.) AND first of all He directs them to a certain End.

PROVIDENCE never shoots at Rovers. There is an Arrow that flies by Night, as well as by Day, and GOD is the Person that shoots it, who can aim them as well as in the Day.

THERE is not the least Thing that falls within the Cognizance of Man, but is directed by the Counsel of GOD. *Not an Hair can fall from our Head, nor a Sparrow to the Ground, without the Will of our heavenly Father.* Such an universal Super-intendency has the Eye and Hand of Providence over all, even the most minute and inconsiderable Things.

NAY, and sinful Actions too are over-ruled to a certain Issue; even that horrid Villainy of the Crucifixion of our Saviour, was not a Thing left to the Disposal of Chance and Uncertainty; but in *Acts ii. 23.* it is said of Him, that *He was delivered to the wicked Hands of his Murderers, by the determinate Counsel and Fore-knowledge of GOD:* For surely the Son of GOD could not die by Chance, nor the greatest Thing that ever came to pass in Nature, be left to an undeterminate Event.

IN a Word, if we allow GOD to be the Governor of the World, we cannot but grant, that He orders and disposes of all inferior Events; and if we allow Him to be a wise and a rational Governor, He cannot but direct them to a certain End.

(2.) IN the next Place He directs all these appearing Casualties, not only to certain, but also to very great Ends.

HE that created Something out of Nothing, surely can raise great Things out of small; and bring all the scattered and disorder'd Passages of Affairs into a great, beautiful, and exact Frame. Now this over-ruling, directing Power of GOD may be considered,

*First*, IN Reference to the Societies, or united Bodies of Men.

*Secondly*, IN Reference to particular Persons.

*First*. And first for Societies. GOD and Nature do not principally concern themselves in the Preservation of Particulars, but of Kinds and Companies. Accordingly, we must allow Providence to be more intent and solicitous about Nations and Governments, than about any private Interest whatsoever. Upon which Account it must needs have a peculiar Influence upon the Erection, Continuance, and Dissolution of every Society. Which great Effects it is strange to consider, by what small, inconsiderable Means they are often brought about, and those so wholly undesign'd by such as are the immediate visible Actors in them. Examples of this, we have both in Holy Writ, and also in other Stories.

AND



AND first for those of the former Sort.

LET us reflect upon that strange and unparallel'd Story of *Joseph* and his Brethren; a Story that seems to be made up of Nothing else but Chances, and little Contingencies, all directed to mighty Ends. For was it not a mere Chance that his Father *Jacob* should send him to visit his Brethren, just at that Time that the *Ishmaelites* were to pass by that Way, and so his unnatural Brethren take Occasion to sell him to them, and they to carry him into *Ægypt*? And then that he should be cast into Prison, and thereby brought at length to the Knowledge of *Pharaoh* in that unlikely Manner that he was? Yet by a joint Connection of every one of these casual Events, Providence served itself in the Preservation of a Kingdom from Famine, and of the Church, then circumscrib'd within the Family of *Jacob*. Likewise by their sojourning in *Ægypt*, he made Way for their Bondage there, and their Bondage for a glorious Deliverance through those prodigious Manifestations of the Divine Power, in the several Plagues inflicted upon the *Ægyptians*.

AND then for Examples out of other Histories, to hint a few of them.

PERHAPS there is none more remarkable, than that Passage about *Alexander* the Great, in his famed Expedition against *Darius*.

WHEN in his March towards him, chancing to bathe himself in the River *Cydnus*, through the excessive Coldness of those Waters, he fell sick, near unto Death, for three Days; during which short Space the *Persian* Army had advanced into the strait Passages of *Cicilia*; by which Means *Alexander* with his small Army was able to equal them  
under

under those Disadvantages, and to fight and conquer them. Whereas had not this Stop been given by that accidental Sickneſs, his great Courage would, beyond all Doubt, have carried him directly forward to the Enemy, 'till he had met him in the vaſt open Plains of *Persia*, where his ſmall Numbers would have been contemptible, and the *Persian* Multitudes formidable; and in all Likelihood of Reaſon, victorious. So that this one little Accident of that Prince's taking a Fancy to bathe himſelf at that Time, cauſed the Interruption of his March, and that Interruption gave Occaſion to that great Victory that founded the third Monarchy of the World. In like Manner, how much of Caſualty was there in the Preſervation of *Romulus*, as ſoon as born expoſed by his Uncle, and took up and nourished by a Shepherd? (for the Story of the She-Wolf is a Fable.) And yet in that one Accident was laid down the Foundation of the fourth univerſal Monarchy.

How doubtful a Caſe was it, whether *Hannibal*, after the Battle of *Cannæ*, ſhould march directly to *Rome*, or *Campania*? Certain it is, that there was more Reaſon for the former; and he was a Perſon that had ſometimes the Command of Reaſon, as well as Regiments: Yet his Reaſon deſerted his Conduct at that Time, and by not going to *Rome*, he gave Occaſion to thoſe Recruits of the *Roman* Strength, that prevailed to the Conqueſt of his Country, and at length to the Deſtruction of *Carthage* itſelf, one of the moſt puiſſant Cities in the World.

AND to deſcend to Occurrences within our own Nation. How many ſtrange Accidents concurred in the whole Buſineſs of King *Henry* the Eighth's Divorce! Yet we ſee Providence directed it and them

them to an entire Change of the Affairs and State of the whole Kingdom. And surely, there could not be a greater Chance than that which brought to Light, the Powder-Treason, when Providence (as it were) snatch'd a King and Kingdom out of the Jaws of Death, only by the Mistake of a Word in the Direction of a Letter.

But of all Cases, in which little Casualties produce great and strange Effects, the chief is in War, upon the Issues of which hangs the Fortune of States and Kingdoms.

CÆSAR, I am sure, whose great Sagacity and Conduct put his Success as much out of the Power of Chance, as human Reason could well do; yet upon Occasion of a notable Experiment that had like to have lost him his whole Army at *Dyrrachium*, tells us the Power of it in the third Book of his Commentaries, *De Bello Civili*, "*Fortuna quæ plurimum potest, cum in aliis rebus, tum præcipue in bellis, in parvis momentis magnas rerum mutationes effecit.*" Nay, and a greater than *Cæsar*, even the Spirit of God Himself, in *Eccles. vi. 11.* expressly declares, *that the Battle is not always to the Strong.* So that upon this Account, every Warrior may in some Sense be said to be a Soldier of Fortune; and the best Commanders to have a Kind of Lottery for their Work, as, amongst us, they have for a Reward. For how often have whole Armies been routed by a little Mistake, or a sudden Fear raised in the Soldiers Minds, upon some trivial Ground or Occasion?

SOMETIMES the Misunderstanding of a Word has scattered and destroyed those who have been even in Possession of Victory, and wholly turned the Fortune of the Day. A Spark of Fire, or an unexpected



unexpected Guff of Wind may ruin a Navy. And sometimes a false, senseless Report has spread so far, and sunk so deep into the Peoples Minds, as to cause a Tumult, and that Tumult a Rebellion, and that Rebellion has ended in the Suversion of a Government.

AND in the late War between the King and some of his Rebel-Subjects, has it not sometimes been at an even Cast, whether his Army should march this Way, or that Way? Whereas had it took that Way, which actually it did not, Things afterwards so fell out, that in very high Probability, it must have met with such Success, as would have put an happy Issue to that wretched War, and thereby have continued the Crown upon that Prince's Head, and his Head upon his Shoulders.

MANY Passages happen in the World, much like that *little Clond*, 1 Kings xviii. that appeared at first to *Elijah's* Servant, *no bigger than a Man's Hand*, but presently after grew and spread, and blacken'd the Face of the whole Heaven, and then discharged itself in Thunder and Rain, and a mighty Tempest. So these Accidents when they first happen, seem but small and contemptible; but by Degrees they branch out, and widen themselves into such a numerous Train of mischievous Consequences, one drawing after it another, by a continued Dependence and Multiplication, that the Plague becomes victorious and universal, and personal Miscarriage determines in a national Calamity.

FOR who, that should view the small, despicable Beginnings of some Things and Persons at first, could imagine or prognosticate those vast and stupendous

pendous Increases of Fortune, that have afterwards followed them?

WHO, that has look'd upon *Agathocles* first handling the Clay, and making Pots under his Father, and afterwards turning Robber, could have thought, that from such a Condition, he should come to be King of *Sicily*?

WHO, that had seen *Mafianello*, a poor Fisherman with his red Cap, and his Angle, could have reckon'd it possible to see such a pitiful Thing within a Week after, shining in his Cloth of Gold, and with a Word, or a Nod, absolutely commanding the whole City of *Naples*?

IT is (as it were) the Sport of the Almighty, thus to baffle and confound the Sons of Men by such Events, as both cross the Methods of their Actings, and surpass the Measure of their Expectations. For according to both these, Men still suppose a gradual natural Progress of Things; as that from *great*, Things and Persons should grow *greater*, till at length, by many Steps and Ascents, they come to be at the *greatest*; not considering, that when Providence designs strange and mighty Changes, it gives Men Wings instead of Legs; and instead of climbing leisurely, makes them at once fly to the Top and Height of Greatness and Power. So that the World about them (looking up to those illustrious Upstarts (scarce knows *who*, or *whence* they were, nor they themselves *where* they are.

IT were infinite to insist upon particular Instances; Histories are full of them, and Experience seals the Truth of History.

IN

IN the next Place, let us consider to what great Purposes GOD directs these little Casualties, with Reference to particular Persons; and those either publick or private.

I. AND first for publick Persons as Princes. Was it not a mere Accident, that *Pharaoh's* Daughter met with *Moses*? Yet it was a Means to bring him up in the *Ægyptian* Court, then the School of all Arts and Policy, and so to fit him for that great and arduous Employment that GOD designed him to. For see upon what little Hinges that great Affair turned; for had either the Child been cast out, or *Pharaoh's* Daughter come down the River but an Hour sooner, or later; or had that little Vessel not been cast by the Parents, or carried by the Water into that very Place, where it was, in all Likelihood the Child must have undergone the common Lot of other *Hebrew* Children, and been either starved or drowned. That *Octavius Cæsar* should shift his Tent (which he had never used to do before) just that very Night that it happened to be took by the Enemy, was a mere Casualty; yet such an one, as preserved a Person who lived to establish a total Alteration of Government in the Imperial City of the World.

But we need not go far for a Prince preserved by as strange a Series of little Contingencies, as ever were managed by the Art of Providence to so great a Purpose.

THERE was but an Hair's Breadth between him and certain Destruction, for the Space of many Days. For had the Rebel-forces gone one Way, rather than another, or come but a little sooner to his hiding Place, or but mistrusted something which they passed over, (all which Things might very easily

VOL. XLIII. F have



have happened;) we had not seen this Face of Things at this Day.

ON the contrary, when Providence designs Judgment, or Destruction to a Prince, No-body knows by what little, unusual, unregarded Means the fatal Blow shall reach him. If *Ahab* be designed for Death, though a Soldier in the Enemies Army draws a Bow at a Venture; yet the sure, unerring Directions of Providence shall carry it in a direct Course to his Heart, and there lodge the Revenge of Heaven.

AN old Woman shall cast down a Stone from a Wall, and GOD shall send it to the Head of *Abimelech*, and so sacrifice a King in the very Head of his Army.

How many Warnings had *Julius Cæsar* of the fatal *Ides of March*? Whereupon sometimes he resolved not to go the Senate, and sometimes again he would go; and when at length he did go, in his Passage thither, one put into his Hand a Note of the whole Conspiracy against him, together with the Names of the Conspirators, desiring him to read it forthwith. But continual Salutes and Addresses entertaining him all the Way, kept him from saying so great a Life, but with one Glance of his Eye upon the Paper; 'till he came to the fatal Place where he was stabb'd, and died with the very Means of preventing Death in his Hand.

HENRY the second of *France*, by a Splinter, unhappily thrust into his Eye at a solemn Justing, was dispatch'd and sent out of the World, by a sad, but very accidental Death.

IN a Word, GOD has many Ways to reap down the Grandees of the Earth; an Arrow, a Bullet, a Tile, a Stone from an House, is enough to do it: And besides all these Ways, sometimes, when he intends to bereave the World of a Prince or an illustrious Person, he may cast him upon a bold, self-opinioned Physician, worse than his Distemper, who shall dose and bleed, and kill him *secundum artem*, and make a shift to cure him into his Grave.

IN the last Place, we will consider this directing Influence of GOD, with Reference to private Persons; and that, as touching Things of nearest Concernment to them. As.

1. THEIR Lives.
2. THEIR Health.
3. THEIR Reputation.
4. THEIR Friendships.
5. AND lastly, their Employments, or Preferments.

AND first for Mens Lives. Though these are Things for which Nature knows no Price or Ransom; yet I appeal to universal Experience, whether they have not, in many Men, hung often upon a very slender Thread, and the Distance between them and Death been very nice, and the Escape wonderful. There have been some, who upon a slight, and perhaps groundless Occasion, have gone out of a Ship, or House, and the Ship has sunk, and the House has fell immediately after their Departure.

HE that, in a great Wind, suspecting the Strength of his House, betook himself to his Orchard, and walking there, was knocked on the Head by a Tree, falling through the Fury of a sudden Gust, wanted but the Advance of one or two Steps, to have put him out of the Way of that mortal Blow.

HE that being subject to an Apoplexy, used still to carry his Remedy about him; but, upon a Time, shifting his Cloaths, and not taking that with him, chanced, upon that very Day, to be surprized in a Fit, and to die in it, certainly owed his Death to a mere Accident, to a little Inadvertency and Failure of Memory. But not to recount too many Particulars: May not every Soldier, that comes alive out of the Battle, pass for a living Monument of a benign Chance, and an happy Providence? For was he not in the nearest Neighbourhood to Death? And might not the Bullet, that perhaps razed his Cheek, have as easily gone into his Head? And the Sword that glanced upon his Arm, with a little Diversion have found the Way to his Heart? But the Workings of Providence are marvelous, and the Methods secret and untraceable, by which it disposes of the Lives of Men.

IN like Manner, for Mens Health, it is no less wonderful to consider to what strange Casualties many sick Persons often owe their Recovery. Perhaps an unusual Draught, or Morsel, or some accidental Violence of Motion has removed that Malady, that for many Years has baffled the Skill of all Physicians. So that, in Effect, he is the best Physician, that has the best Luck; he prescribes, but it is Chance that cures.

THAT Person, that (being provoked by excessive Pain) thrust his Dagger into his Body, and  
thereby



thereby, instead of reaching his Vitals, opened an Imposthume, the unknown Cause of all his Pain, and so stabbed himself into perfect Health and Ease, surely had great Reason to acknowledge Chance for his Surgeon, and Providence for the Guider of his Hand.

AND then also for Mens Reputation; and that either in Point of Wisdom, or of Wit. There is hardly any Thing, which (for the most Part) falls under a greater Chance. If a Man succeeds in any Attempt, though undertook with never so much Folly and Rashness, his Success shall vouch him a Politician: For give any one Fortune, and he shall be thought a wise Man, in Spite of his Heart; nay, and of his Head too. On the contrary, be a Design never so artificially laid, and spun in the finest Thread of Policy, if it chances to be defeated by some cross Accident, the Man is then run down by an universal Vogue; his Counsels are derided, his Prudence questioned, and his Person despised.

ACHITOPHEL was as great an Oracle, and gave as good Counsel to *Abfalom*, as ever he had given to *David*; but not having the good Luck to be believed, and thereupon losing his former Repute, he thought it high Time to hang himself. And, on the other Side, there have been some, who for several Years have been Fools with tolerable good Reputation, and never discovered themselves to be so, 'till at length they attempted to be Knaves also, but wanted Art and Dexterity.

AND as the Repute of Wisdom, so that of Wit also, is very casual. Sometimes a lucky Saying, or a pertinent Reply, has procured an Esteem of Wit, to Persons otherwise very shallow, and no Ways accustomed to utter such Things by any

standing Ability of Mind; so that if such an one should have the ill Hap at any Time to strike a Man dead with a smart Saying, it ought, in all Reason and Conscience, to be judged but a Chance-medly; the poor Man being no Way guilty of any Design of Wit.

NAY, even where there is a real Stock of Wit, yet the wittiest Sayings and Sentences will be found in a great Measure the Issues of Chance, and nothing else but so many lucky Hits of a roving Fancy.

MOREOVER, sometimes a Man's Reputation rises or falls, as his Memory serves him in a Performance; and yet there is nothing more fickle, slippery, and less under Command, than this Faculty. So that many having used their utmost Diligence to secure a faithful Retention of the Things or Words committed to it, yet after all cannot certainly know where it will trip, and fail them. Any sudden Diversion of the Spirits, or the Justling in of a transient Thought, is able to deface those little Images of Things, and so breaking the Train that was laid in the Mind, to leave a Man in the Lurch: And for the other Part of Memory, called Reminiscence; which is the retrieving of a Thing at present forgot, or but confusedly remembered, by setting the Mind to hunt over all its Notions, and to ransack every little Cell of the Brain: While it is thus busied, how accidentally often does the Thing sought for, offer itself to the Mind? And by what small Hints does the Mind catch Hold of, and recover a vanishing Notion?

In short, though Wit and Learning are certain and habitual Perfections of the Mind, yet the Declaration of them (which alone brings the Repute)

is

is subject to a thousand Hazards. So that every Wit runs something the same Risk with the Astrologer, who if his Predictions come to pass, is cried up to the *Stars* from whence he pretends to draw them; but if not, the Astrologer himself grows more out of Date than his Almanack.

AND then, in the fourth Place, for the Friendships or Enmities that a Man contracts in the World; than which surely there is nothing that has a more direct and potent Influence upon the whole Course of a Man's Life, whether as to Happiness or Misery; yet Chance has the ruling Stroke in them all.

A MAN by mere Peradventure lights into Company, possibly is driven into an House by a Shower of Rain for present Shelter, and there begins an Acquaintance with a Person; which Acquaintance and Endearment grows and continues, even when Relations fail, and perhaps proves the Support of his Mind, and of his Fortunes, to his dying Day.

AND the like holds in Enmities, which come much more easily than the other. A Word unadvisedly spoken on the one Side, or misunderstood on the other; any the least Surmize of Neglect; sometimes a bare Gesture; nay, the very Unsuitableness of one Man's Aspect to another Man's Fancy, has raised such an Aversion to him, as in Time has produced a perfect Hatred of him, and that so strong and so tenacious, that it has never left vexing and troubling him, 'till perhaps at length it has worried him to his Grave; yea, and after Death too, has pursued him in his surviving Shadow, exercising the same Tyranny upon his very Name and Memory.

It



It is hard to please Men of some Tempers, who indeed hardly know what will please themselves; and yet if a Man does not please them, which it is ten thousand to one if he does, if they can but have Power equal to their Malice, (as sometimes to plague the World, God lets them have) such an one must expect all the Mischief that Power and Spite, lighting upon a base Mind, can possibly do him.

In the last Place. As for Mens Employments and Preferments, every Man that sets forth into the World, comes into a great Lottery, and draws some one certain Profession to act and live by, but knows not the Fortune that will attend him in it.

ONE Man perhaps proves miserable in the Study of the Law, which might have flourished in that of Physick or Divinity. Another proves a very dull and heavy Philosopher, who possibly would have made a good Mechanick, and have done well enough at the *useful Philosophy* of the *Spade* or the *Anvil*.

Now, let this Man reflect upon the Time when all these several Callings and Professions were equally offered to his Choice, and consider how indifferent it was once for him to have fixed upon any one of them, and what *little* Accidents and Considerations cast the Ballance of his Choice, rather one Way than the other; and he will find how easily Chance may throw a Man upon a Profession, which all his Diligence cannot make him fit for.

AND then for the Preferments of the World, he that would reckon up all the Accidents that they depend upon, may as well undertake to count the Sands,

Sands, or to sum up Infinity; so that Greatness, as well as an Estate, may, upon this Account, be properly called a Man's *Fortune*, soasmuch as no Man can state either the Acquisition or Preservation of it upon any certain Rules; every Man, as well as the *Merchant*, being here truly an *Adventurer*: For the Ways by which it is obtained, are various, and frequently contrary: One Man, by sneaking and flattering, comes to Riches and Honour, (where it is in the Power of Fools to bestow them) upon Observation whereof, another presently thinks to arrive to the same Greatness, by the very same Means; but striving like the Ass, to court his Master, just as the Spaniel had done before him, instead of being stroked and made much of, he is only rated off and cudgelled for all his Courtship.

THE Source of Mens Preferments is most commonly the Will, Humour and Fancy of Persons in Power; whereupon, when a Prince or Grandee manifests a Liking to such a Thing, such an Art, or such a Pleasure, Men generally set about to make themselves considerable for such Things, and thereby through his Favour to advance themselves, and at length, when they have spent their whole Time in them, and so are become fit for Nothing else, that Prince or Grandee perhaps dies, and another succeeds him, quite of a different Disposition, and inclining him to be pleased with quite different Things. Whereupon these Mens Hopes, Studies and Expectations are wholly at an End. And besides, though the Grandee whom they build upon, should not die, or quit the Stage, yet the same Person does not always like the same Things. For Age may alter his Constitution, Humour, or Appetite; or the Circumstances of his Affairs may put him upon different Courses and Counsels; every  
one

one of which Accidents wholly alters the Road to Preferment. So that those who travel that Road must be (like Highwaymen) very dextrous in shifting the Way upon every Turn; and yet their very doing so, sometimes proves the Means of their being found out, understood, and abhorred; and for this very Cause, that they are ready to do any Thing, are justly thought fit to be preferred to Nothing.

CÆSAR BORGIA (base Son to Pope *Alexander VI.*) used to boast to his Friend *Machiavel*, that he had contrived his Affairs and Greatness into such a Posture of Firmness, that whether his holy Father lived or died, they could not but be secure. If he lived, there could be no Doubt of them; and if he died, he laid his Interest so, as to overrule the next Election, as he pleased. But all this while, the Politician never thought, or considered, that he might in the mean Time fall dangerously sick, and that Sicknes necessitate his Removal from the Court, and during that his Absence, his Father die, and so his Interest decay, and his mortal Enemy be chosen to the Papacy, as indeed it fell out. So that for all his exact Plot, down was he cast, from all his Greatness, and forced to end his Days in a mean Condition: As it is Pity but all such politick Opiniators should.

So much has Chance the Casting-Voice in the Disposal of all the great Things of the World. That which Men call *Merit*, is a mere *Nothing*. For even when Persons of the greatest Worth and Merit are preferred, it is not their Merit, but their Fortune that prefers them. And then, for that other so much admired Thing called *Policy*, it is but little better: For when Men have busted themselves, and beat their Brains never so much,



the whole Result both of their Counsels, and their Fortunes, is still at the Mercy of an Accident. And therefore, whosoever that Man was, that said, that he had rather have a Grain of Fortune, than a Pound of Wisdom; as to the Things of this Life, he spoke Nothing but the Voice of Wisdom and great Experience.

I AM far from affirming, that I have recounted all, or indeed the hundredth Part of those Casualties of human Life, that may display the full Compass of Divine Providence; but surely, I have reckoned up so many, as sufficiently enforce the Necessity of our Reliance upon it, and that in Opposition to two Extremes that Men are usually apt to fall into.

I. Too much Confidence and Presumption; in a prosperous Estate. *David* after his Deliverances from *Saul*, and his Victories over all his Enemies round about him, in *Psalms xxx. 7, 8.* confesses that his Prosperity had raised him to such a Pitch of Confidence, as to make him say, *that he should never be moved, GOD of his Favour had made his Hill so strong:* But presently he adds, almost in the very same Breath, *Thou didst bide thy Fate, and I was troubled.*

THE Sun shines in his full Brightness, but the very Moment before he passes under a Cloud. Who knows what a Day, what an Hour, nay, what a Minute may bring forth! He who builds upon the Present, builds upon the narrow Compass of a Point; and where the Foundation is so narrow, the Superstructure cannot be high and strong too.

Is a Man confident of his present Health and Strength? Why, an unwholesome Blast of Air, a Cold,

Cold, or a Surfeit took by Chance, may shake in Pieces his hardy Fabrick, and (in Spite of all his Youth and Vigour) send him, in the very Flower of his Years, pining and drooping to his long Home. Nay, he cannot with any Assurance, so much as step out of his Doors, but (unless God commissions his protecting Angel to bear him up in his Hands) he may dash his Foot against a Stone, and fall, and in that Fall breathe his last.

OR is a Man confident of his Estate, Wealth, and Power? Why, let him read of those strange unexpected Dissolutions of the great Monarchies and Governments of the World. Governments that once made such a Noise, and look'd so big in the Eyes of Mankind, as being founded upon the deepest Counsels, and the strongest Force; and yet, by some slight Miscarriage or cross Accident, (which let in Ruin and Desolation upon them at first) are now so utterly extinct, that Nothing remains of them but a Name, nor are there the least Signs or Traces of them to be found, but only in Story. When (I say) he shall have well reflected upon this, let him see what Security he can promise himself in his own little personal domestick Concerns, which at the best have but the Protection of the Laws to guard and defend them, which are far from being able to defend themselves.

No Man can rationally account himself secure, unless he could command all the Chances of the World: But how should he command them, when he cannot so much as number them? Possibilities are as infinite as GOD's Power, and whatsoever may come to pass, no Man can certainly conclude shall not come to pass.

PEOPLE

PEOPLE forget how little it is that they know, and how much less it is that they can do, when they grow confident upon any present State of Things.

THERE is no one Enjoyment that a Man pleases himself in, but is liable to be lost by ten thousand Accidents wholly out of all mortal Power, either to foresee or to prevent. Reason allows none to be confident, but Him only who governs the World, who knows all Things, and can do all Things, and therefore can neither be surprized nor overpowered.

2. THE other Extreme, which these Considerations should arm the Heart of Man against, is, utter Despondency of Mind in a Time of pressing Adversity.

As he who presumes, steps into the Throne of God; so he that despairs, limits an infinite Power to a finite Apprehension, and measures Providence by his own little, contracted Model. But the Contrivances of Heaven are as much above our Politicks, as beyond our Arithmetick.

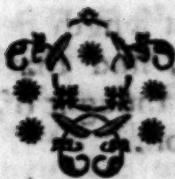
OF those many Millions of Casualties which we are not aware of, there is hardly One but God can make an Instrument of our Deliverance. And most Men, who are at length delivered from any great Distress indeed, find that they are so, by Ways that they never thought of, Ways above or beside their Imagination.

AND therefore let no Man, who owns the Belief of a Providence, grow desperate or forlorn under any Calamity or Strait whatsoever; but compose the Anguish of his Thoughts, and rest his



amazed Spirits upon this one Consideration, that *he knows not which Way the Lot may fall*, or what may happen to him; he comprehends not those strange unaccountable Methods, by which Providence may dispose of him.

IN a Word. To sum up all the foregoing Discourse: Since the Interest of Governments and Nations, of Princes and private Persons, and that both as to *Life and Health, Reputation and Honour, Friendships and Enmities, Employments and Preferments*, (notwithstanding all the Contrivance and Power that human Nature can exert above them) remain so wholly contingent, as to us; surely all the Reason of Mankind cannot suggest any solid Ground of Satisfaction, but in making that God our Friend, who is the sole and absolute Disposer of all these Things: And in carrying a Conscience so clear towards *Him*, as may encourage us with Confidence to cast ourselves upon him; and in all Casualties still to promise ourselves the best Events from his Providence, to whom Nothing is casual; who constantly wills the truest Happiness to those that trust in Him, and works all Things according to the Counsel of that blessed Will.

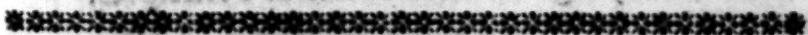




## S E R M O N IV.

*The Practice of Religion enforced  
by Reason.*

Preached at Westminster-Abbey, 1667.



PROV. X. 9.

*He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.*

**A**S it were easy to evince, both from Reason and Experience, that there is a restless Activity in the Soul of Man, continually disposing it to operate and exert its Faculties; so the Phrase of Scripture still expresses the Life of Man by *Walking*; that is, it represents an active Principle in an active Posture. And, because the Nature of Man carries him thus out to Action, it is no Wonder if the same Nature equally renders him solicitous about the Event of his Actions:

For every one, by reflecting upon the Way and Method of his own Workings, will find that he is still determined in them by a Respect to the Consequence of what he does, always proceeding upon this Argumentation; *If I do such a Thing, such an Advantage will follow from it, and therefore I will do it. And if I do this, such a Mischief will ensue thereupon, and therefore I will forbear.* Every one, I say, is concluded by this practical Discourse, and for a Man to bring his Actions to the Event proposed and designed by him, is *to walk surely*. But since the Event of an Action usually follows the Nature or Quality of it, and the Quality follows the Rule directing it, it concerns a Man, by all Means, in the Framing of his Actions, not to be deceived in the Rule which he proposes for the Measure of them; which, without great Caution, he may be these two Ways:

1. BY laying false and deceitful Principles.
2. IN Case he lays right Principles, yet by mistaking in the Consequences which he draws from them.

AN Error in either of which, is equally dangerous; for if a Man is to draw a Line, it is all one whether he does it by a crooked Rule, or by a strait one misapplied. He who fixes upon false Principles, treads upon infirm Ground, and so sinks; and he who fails in his Deductions from right Principles, stumbles upon firm Ground, and so falls; the Disaster is not of the same Kind, but of the same Mischief in both.

It must be confessed, that it is sometimes very hard to judge of the Truth or Goodness of Principles, considered barely in themselves, and abstracted



ed from their Consequences. But certainly he acts upon the surest Grounds in the World, who, whether the Principles which he acts upon, prove true or false, yet secures an happy Issue to his Actions.

Now, he who guides his Actions by the Rules of Religion, lays these two Principles as the great Ground of all that he does:

I. THAT there is an infinite, eternal, all-wise Mind governing the Affairs of the World, and taking such an Account of the Actions of Men, as, according to the Quality of them, to punish or reward them.

II. THAT there is an Estate of Happiness or Misery, after this Life, allotted to every Man, according to the Quality of his Actions here. These, I say, are the Principles which every religious Man proposes to himself; and the Deduction which he makes from them, is this: That it is his grand Interest so to behave in this World, as to secure himself from an Estate of Misery in the other. And thus to act, is, in the Phrase of Scripture, *to walk uprightly*; and it is my Business to prove, that he who acts in the Strength of this Conclusion, drawn from the two fore-mentioned Principles, *walks surely*, or secures an happy Event to his Actions, against all Contingencies whatsoever.

AND to demonstrate this, I shall consider the said Principles under a three-fold Supposition;

1. As certainly true;
2. As probable; and,
3. As false.

AND if the pious Man brings his Actions to an happy End, whichsoever of these Suppositions be right, then certainly there is none who *walks so surely* as he who is religious.

I. FIRST therefore we will take these Principles (as we may very well do) for *certainly true*; where, though the Method of the present Discourse does not engage me to *prove them so*, but only to shew what follows upon a Supposal *that they are so*; yet, to give the greater Clearness to the Subject, I shall briefly demonstrate them thus.

IT is necessary, that there should be some first Mover; and, if so, a first Being: And the first Being must infer an infinite, unlimited Perfection in the said Being; forasmuch as if it were finite or limited, that Limitation must have been either itself, or from Something else. But not from itself, since it is contrary to Reason and Nature, that any Being should limit its own Perfection; nor yet from Something else, since then it should not have been the *First*, as supposing some other Thing co-evous to it, which is against the present Supposition. So that it being clear, that there must be a *First Being*, and that infinitely perfect, it will follow, that all other Perfection that is, must be derived from it; and so we infer the Creation of the World: And then supposing the World created by GOD, (since it is no Ways reconcileable to GOD's Wisdom, that He should not also govern it) Creation must needs infer Providence: And then, it being granted, that GOD governs the World, it will also follow, that He does it by Means suitable to the Natures of the Things He governs, and to the Attainment of the proper Ends of Government. And moreover, Man being by Nature a free, moral Agent, and so, capable of  
deviating

deviating from his Duty, as well as performing it, it is necessary that he should be governed by Laws: And since Laws require that they be enforced with the Sanction of Rewards and Punishment, sufficient to work upon the Minds of such as are to be governed by them: And lastly, since Experience shews that Rewards and Punishments, terminated only within this Life, are not sufficient for that Purpose, it follows, that the Rewards and Punishments, which God governs Mankind by, do and must look beyond it.

AND thus I have given a brief Proof of the Certainty of these Principles; namely, *that there is a supreme Governor of the World; and that there is a future Estate of Happiness or Misery for Men after this Life*: Which Principles, while a Man steers his Course by, if he acts piously, soberly, and temperately, I suppose there needs no farther Arguments to evince, that he acts prudently and safely: For he acts as under the Eye of his Judge, who reaches to his Creature a Command with one Hand, and a Reward with the other: He spends as a Person who knows that he must come to a Reckoning: He sees an eternal Happiness or Misery suspended upon a few Days Behaviour, and therefore he lives every Hour as for Eternity: His future Condition has such a powerful Influence upon his present Practice, because he entertains a continual Apprehension, and a firm Persuasion of it. If a Man walks over a narrow Bridge when he is drunk, it is no Wonder that he forgets his Caution, while he over-looks the Danger. But he who is sober, and views that nice Separation between himself and the devouring Deep, so that if he should slip, he sees his Grave gaping under him, surely must needs take every Step with the utmost Caution and Sollicitude.

BUT



BUT for a Man to believe it as the most undoubted Certainty in the World, that he shall be judged according to the Quality of his Actions here, and after Judgment receive an eternal Recompence, and yet to take his full Swing in Sin, is it not a greater Frenzy than for a Man to take a Purse at Tyburn, while he is actually seeing another hanged for the same Fact? It is really to dare and defy the Justice of Heaven, to laugh at *right-aiming Thunder-bolts*, to puff at Damnation; and, in a Word, to bid Omnipotence *do its worst*. He indeed, who thus walks, *walks surely*, but it is, because he is *sure* to be damned.

I CONFESS, it is hard to reconcile such a stupid Course to the natural Way of the Soul's Acting; according to which, the Will moves according to the Proposals of *Good* and *Evil*, made by the Understanding: And therefore for a Man to run Headlong into the bottomless Pit, while Conscience assures him, that it is bottomless and open, and all Return from it desperate and impossible; while his Ruin stares him in the Face, and the Sword of Vengeance points at his Heart, still to press on to the Embraces of his Sin, is a Problem unresolvable upon any other Ground, but that Sin infatuates before it destroys. For Judas, to receive and swallow the Sop, when his Master gave it him seasoned with those terrible Words, *It had been good for that Man, that he had never been born*: Surely this argued a furious Appetite, and a strong Stomach; that could thus catch at a Morsel, with the Fire and Brimstone all flaming about it, and (as it were) digest Death itself, and make a Meal upon Perdition.

I COULD wish, that every bold Sinner, when he is about to engage in the Commission of any known Sin,

Sin, would arrest his Confidence, and for a while stop the Execution of his Purpose, with this short Question; *Do I believe it is really true, that God has denounced Death to such a Practice, or do I not?* If he does not, let him renounce his Christianity, and surrender back his Baptism, the Water of which might better serve him to cool his Tongue in Hell, than only to consign him over to the Capacity of so black an Apostacy. But if he does believe, how will he acquit himself upon the Accounts of bare Reason? For, does he think, that if he pursues the Means of Death, they will not bring him to that fatal End? Or does he think that he can grapple with Divine Vengeance, and endure the *everlasting Burnings*, or arm himself against the Bites of the never-dying Worm? No, surely, these are Things not to be imagined; and therefore I cannot conceive what Security the presuming Sinner can promise himself, but upon these two following Accounts:

I. THAT GOD is merciful, and will not be so severe as *his Word*; and that *his Threatnings of eternal Torments are not so absolute, but that there is a very comfortable Latitude left in them for Men of Skill to creep out at.* And, here it must indeed be confessed, that *Origen*, and some others, not long since, who have been so officious as to furbish up, and re-print his old Errors, hold, that the Sufferings of the Damned are not to be, in a strict Sense, *eternal*; but that, after a certain Period of Time, there *shall be a general Goal-delivary of the Souls in Prison*, and that not for a farther Execution, but a *final Release.*

BUT supposing that a few Sinners relieve themselves with such groundless, trifling Considerations as these; yet may they not however fasten a rational

tional Hope upon the boundless Mercy of God; that this may induce him to spare his poor Creature, though by Sin become obnoxious to his Wrath? I answer, the Divine Mercy is indeed large, and far surpassing all created Measures; yet nevertheless it has its proper Time; and after this Life it is the Time of Justice; and to hope for the Favours of Mercy then, is to expect an Harvest in the Dead of Winter. God has cast all his Works into a certain, inviolable Order; according to which, *there is a Time to pardon, and a Time to punish*; and the Time of the One, is not the Time of the Other. When Corn has once felt the Sickle, it has no more Benefit from the Sunshine. But,

2. If the Conscience be too apprehensive to venture the final Issue of Things, upon a fond Persuasion, that the Great Judge of the World will not execute the Sentence pronounced by him; *as if He had threatened Men with Hell, rather to fright them from Sin, than with an Intent to punish them for it*; I say, if the Conscience cannot find any Satisfaction or Support from such Reasonings as these, yet may it not at least relieve itself with the Purposes of a future Repentance, notwithstanding its present Violations of the Law? I answer, that this certainly is a Confidence, of all others, the most ungrounded and irrational: For upon what Ground can a Man promise himself a future Repentance, who cannot promise himself a Futurity? Whose Life depends upon his Breath, and is so restrained to the present, that it cannot secure to itself the Reversion of the very next Minute? Have not many died with the Guilt of Impenitence, and the Designs of Repentance together? If a Man die To-day, by the Prevalence of



of some ill Humours, will it avail him that he intended to have bled and purged To-morrow?

BUT how dares sinful Dust and Ashes invade the Prerogative of Providence, and carve out to himself the Seasons and Issues of Life and Death, which the *Father* keeps wholly *within his own Power*? How does that Man who thinks he sins securely, under the Shelter of some remote Purposes of Amendment, know, but that the Decree above may be already passed against him, and his Allowance of Mercy spent; so that the *Bow in the Clouds* is now drawn, and the Arrow levelled at his Head; and not many Days like to pass, but perhaps an Apoplexy, or an Imposthume, or some sudden Disaster may stop his Breath, and reap him down as a Sinner ripe for Destruction?

I CONCLUDE therefore, that, upon Supposition of the *certain Truth* of the Principles of Religion; he who *walks not uprightly*, has neither from the Presumption of GOD's *Mercy reversing the Decree of his Justice*, nor from his own *Purposes of a future Repentance*, any sure Ground to set his Foot upon; but in this whole Course acts as directly in Contradiction to Nature, as he does in Defiance of Grace. In a Word, he is besotted, and has lost his Reason; and what then can there be for Religion to take Hold of him by?

COME we now to the *Second Supposition*; under which we shew, that the Principles of Religion, laid down by us, might be considered; and that is, as *only probable*. Where we must observe, that *Probability* does not properly make any Alteration, either in the *Truth or Falsity* of Things; but only imports a different Degree of their Clearness, or Appearance to the Understanding. So that that is  
to

to be accounted *probable*, which has more or better Arguments producible for it, that can be brought against it; and surely such a Thing, at least, is Religion. For certain it is, that Religion is universal, I mean, *the first Rudiments and general Notions of Religion, called Natural Religion, and consisting in the Acknowledgment of a Deity, and of the common Principles of Morality, and a future Estate of Souls after Death.* This Notion of Religion has diffused itself in some Degree or other, as far as human Nature extends: So that there is no Nation in the World, though plunged into never so gross Idolatry, but has some awful Sense of a Deity, and a Persuasion of a State of Retribution to Men after this Life.

BUT now, if there are really no such Things, but all is a mere Lye, and a Fable, contrived only to chain up the Liberty of Man's Nature from a freer Enjoyment of those Things, which otherwise it would have as full a Right to enjoy, as to breathe: I demand whence this Persuasion could thus come to be universal? For was it ever known, in any other Instance, that the whole World was brought to conspire in the Belief of a Lye? Nay, and of such a Lye, as should lay upon Men such unpleasing Abridgments, tying them up from a full Gratification of those Lusts and Appetites, which they so impatiently desire to satisfy, and consequently, by all Means, to remove those Impediments that might any Way obstruct their Satisfaction? Since therefore it cannot be made out, upon any Principle of Reason, how all the Nations in the World, otherwise so distant in Situation, Manners, Interests; and Inclination, should by Design or Combination, meet in one Persuasion; and withall, that Men, who so mortally hate to be deceived, and imposed upon, should yet suffer themselves to be deceived by

by such a Persuasion as is false; and not only false, but also cross and contrary to their strongest Desires; so that if it were false, they would set the utmost Force of their Reason on Work to discover that Falsity, and thereby disenthral themselves: And farther, since there is Nothing false, but what may be proved to be so: And yet, lastly, since all the Power and Industry of Man's Mind, has not been hitherto able to prove a Falsity in the Principles of Religion, it irrefragably follows, that Religion is, at least, a very high Probability.

AND this is that which I here contend for, that it is not necessary to the obliging Men to believe Religion to be true, that this Truth be made out to their Reason, by Arguments demonstratively certain; but that it is sufficient to render their Unbelief unexcusable, even upon the Account of bare Reason, if the Truth of Religion carry in it a much greater Probability, than any of those Reasonings that pretend the Contrary: And this I prove in the Strength of these two Considerations.

1. THAT no Man, in Matters of this Life, requires an Assurance either of the Good, which he designs, or of the Evil which he avoids, from Arguments demonstratively certain; but judges himself to have sufficient Ground to act upon, from a probable Persuasion of the Event of Things. No Man, who first trafficks into a foreign Country, has any scientifick Evidence, that there is such a Country, but by Report, which can produce no more than a moral Certainty; that is, a very high Probability, and such as there can be no Reason to except against. He who has a probable Belief, that he shall meet with Thieves in such a Road, thinks himself to have Reason enough to decline it, albeit he is sure to sustain some Inconvenience by



his so doing. But perhaps it may be replied, (and it is all that can be replied) that a greater Assurance and Evidence is required of the Things of the other World, than of the Interests of this. To which I answer, that Assurance and Evidence have no Place here, as being contrary to our present Supposition; according to which, we are now treating of the practical Principles of Religion, only as *probable*. And for this, I affirm, that where the Case is about the hazarding an eternal, or a temporal Concern, there a less Degree of Probability ought to engage our Caution against the Loss of the former, than is necessary to engage it about preventing the Loss of the latter. Forasmuch, as where Things are least to be put to the Venture, as the eternal Interests of the other World ought to be; there every, even the least Probability of Danger, should be provided against; but where the Loss can be but temporal, every small Probability of it, need not put us so anxiously to prevent it, since though it should happen, the Loss might be repaired; or, if not, could not however destroy us, by reaching us in our highest Concern; which no temporal Thing whatsoever is, or can be.

AND this directly introduces the

2. CONSIDERATION or Argument, *viz.* That bare Reason, discoursing upon a Principle of Self-Preservation (the fundamental Principle which Nature proceeds by) will oblige a Man voluntarily to undergo any less Evil, to secure himself but from the Probability of an Evil incomparably greater, and that also, such an one, as, if that Probability passes into a certain Event, admits of no Reparation by any After-remedy

Now

Now, that Religion teaching a future Estate of Souls, is a Probability; and that its Contrary cannot with equal Probability be proved, we have already evinced. This therefore being supposed, we will suppose yet farther, that for a Man to abridge himself in the full Satisfaction of his Appetites and Inclinations, is an Evil, because a present Pain and Trouble: But then it must likewise be granted, that Nature must needs abhor a State of eternal Pain and Misery much more; and that if a Man does not undergo the former less Evil, it is highly probable that such an eternal Estate of Misery will be his Portion: And if so, I would know whether that Man takes a rational Course to preserve himself, who refuses the Endurance of these lesser Troubles, to secure himself from a Condition inconceivably more miserable.

BUT since Probability, in the Nature of it, supposes that a Thing *may*, or *may not* be so, for any Thing that yet appears or is certainly determined on either Side; we will here consider both Sides of this Probability: As,

1. THAT it is possible, there may be no such Thing as future Happiness or Misery, for those who have lived well or ill here; and then he, who upon the Strength of a contrary Belief, abridged himself in the Gratification of his Appetites, sustains only this Evil, *viz.* That he did not please his Senses, and unbounded Desires, so much as otherwise he might, and would have done, had he not lived under the Check of such a Belief. This is the utmost which he suffers: But whether this be a real Evil or no (whatsoever vulgar Minds may think) shall be discoursed of afterwards.

2. BUT then again, on the other Side, it is probable there will be such a future Estate; and then, how miserable is the voluptuous, sensual Unbeliever? For there can be no Retreat for him then, no mending of his Choice in the other World, no After-game to be play'd in Hell. It fares with Men in Reference to their future Estate, and the Condition upon which they must pass to it, much as it does with a Merchant, having a Vessel richly fraught at Sea in a Storm: The Storm grows higher and higher, and threatens the utter Loss of the Ship: but there is one, and but one certain Way to save it, which is, by throwing its rich Lading over-board; yet still, for all this, the Man knows not but *possibly* the Storm may cease, and so all be preserved, however, in the mean Time, there is little or no Probability that it will do so; and in Case it should not, he is then assured, that he must lay his Life, as well as his rich Commodities, in the cruel Deep. Now, in this Case, would this Man think we act rationally, should he, upon the slender *Possibility* of escaping otherwise, neglect the sure, infallible Preservation of his Life, by casting away his rich Goods? No certainly, it would be so far from it, that should the Storm, by a strange Hap, cease immediately after he has thus thrown away his Riches; yet the throwing them away, was infinitely more rational and eligible, than the retaining them could have been.

FOR a Man, while he lives here, to doubt whether there be any Hell or no; and thereupon to live so, as if absolutely there were none; but when he dies, to find himself confuted in the Flames; this, surely, must be the Height of Woe and Disappointment, and a bitter Conviction of an irrational Venture, and an absurd Choice. In doubtful Cases, Reason still determines for the safer Side; especially



pecially if the Case be not only doubtful, but also highly concerning, and the Venture be of a Soul, and an Eternity.

HE who sat at a Table, richly and deliciously furnished, but with a Sword hanging over his Head by one single Thread, surely had enough to check his Appetite, even against all the Raging of Hunger, and Temptations of Sensuality. The only Argument that could any Way encourage his Appetite, was, that *possibly the Sword might not fall*, but when his Reason should encounter it with another Question, *What if it should fall?* And moreover, that pitiful Stay by which it hung, should oppose the Likelihood that it would, to a mere Possibility of that it might not; What could the Man enjoy or taste of his rich Banquet with all this Doubt and Horror working in his Mind?

THOUGH a Man's Condition should be really in itself never so safe, yet an Apprehension and Surmise that it is not safe, is enough to make a quick and a tender Reason sufficiently miserable. Let the most acute and learned Unbeliever, demonstrate that there is no Hell: And if he can, he sins so much the more rationally, otherwise if he cannot, the Case remains doubtful at least: But he who sins obstinately, does not act as if it were so much as doubtful; for if it were certain and evident to Sense, he could do no more; but for a Man to found a confident Practice upon a disputable Principle, is brutishly to out-run his Reason, and to build ten Times wider than his Foundation. In a Word, I look upon this one short Consideration (were there no more) as a sufficient Ground for any rational Man to take up his Religion upon, and which I defy the subtlest Atheist in the Word

solidly to answer, or confute; namely, *that it is good to be sure.*

AND so I proceed to the

THIRD and last Supposition: Under which the Principles of Religion may (for Argument Sake) be considered; and that is, as false; which surely must reach the Thoughts of any Atheist whatsoever. Nevertheless, even upon this Account also, I doubt not but to evince, that he who walks uprightly, walks much more more surely, than the wicked and prophane Liver; and that with Reference to the most valued temporal Enjoyments, such as are, Reputation, Quietness, Health, and the like, which are the greatest which this Life affords, or is desirable for. And,

I. FOR Reputation or Credit. Is any one had in greater Esteem than the just Person; who has given the World an Assurance, by the constant Tenor of his Practice, that he makes a Conscience of his Ways; that he scorns to do an unworthy, or a base Thing; to lye, to defraud, to undermine another's Interest by sinister Arts? And is there any Thing, which reflects a greater Lustre upon a Man's Person, than a severe Temperance, and a Restraint of himself from vicious and unlawful Pleasures? Does any Thing shine so bright as Virtue, and that even in the Eyes of those who are void of it? For hardly shall you find any one so bad, but he desires the Credit of *being Thought*, what his Vice will not let him *Be*? so great a Pleasure, and Convenience is it, to live with Honour, and a fair Acceptance, amongst those whom we converse with: And a Being without it, is not *Life*, but rather the *Skeleton* or *Caput mortuum*

um of *Life*; like Time without Day, or Day itself without the Shining of the Sun to enliven it.

ON the other Side, is there any Thing that more embitters the Enjoyments of this Life, than just Shame and Reproach? Yet this is generally the Lot of the Impious and Irreligious, and of some of them more especially.

FOR how infamous, in the first Place, is the false, fraudulent and unconscionable Person? And how quickly is his Character known? For hardly ever did any Man of no Conscience continue a Man of any Credit long. Likewise, how odious, as well as infamous, is such an One? especially, if he be arrived at that consummate Degree of Falshood, to play in and out, and shew Tricks with Oaths, the sacredest Bonds which the Conscience of Man can be bound with. So that let never so much Honour be placed upon him, it cleaves not to him, but forthwith ceases to be Honour, by being so placed; no Preferment can sweeten him, but the higher he stands, the farther and wider he stinks.

To go over all the several Kinds of Vice and Wickedness, should we set aside the Considerations of the Glories of a better World, and allow this Life for the only Place and Scene of Man's Happiness; yet surely *Cato* will be always more honourable than *Clodius*, and *Cicero* than *Cataline*. Fidelity, Justice, and Temperance, will always draw their own Reward after them, or rather carry it with them, in those Marks of Honour which they fix upon the Persons who practise and pursue them. It is said of *David*, in 1 Chron. xxix. 28. *That he died full of Days, Riches and Honour*; and there was no Need of an Heaven, to render him in all Respects a much happier Man than *Saul*.

BUT



BUT in the *second* Place, the religious Person walks upon surer Grounds, than the vicious and irreligious, in Respect of the Ease, Peace, and Quietness which he enjoys in this World; and which certainly make no small Part of human Felicity. For Anxiety and Labour are great Ingredients of that Curse which Sin has entail'd upon fallen Man. Care and Toil came into the World with Sin, and remain ever since inseparable from it, both as to its Punishment and Effect.

THE Service of Sin is perfectly Slavery; and he who will pay Obedience to the Commands of it, shall find it an unreasonable Task-master, and an unmeasurable Exactor.

AND to represent the Case of some Particulars. The ambitious Person must rise early, and sit up late, and pursue his Design with a constant, indefatigable Attendance; he must be infinitely patient and servile, and obnoxious to all the cross Humours of those whom he expects to rise by. He must endure and digest all Sorts of Affronts, adore the Foot that kicks him, and kiss the Hand that strikes him; while in the mean Time, the humble and contented Man is virtuous at a much easier Rate: His Virtue bids him sleep, and takes his Rest, while the other's restless Sin bids him sit up and watch: He pleases himself innocently and easily, while the ambitious Man attempts to please others sinfully and difficultly, and perhaps, in the Issue, unsuccessfully too.

THE Robber, and the Man of Rapine, must run, and ride, and use all the dangerous, and even desperate Ways of Escape; and probably, after all, his Sin betrays him to a Gaol, and from thence advances him to the Gibbet: But let him carry off  
his

his Booty with as much Safety and Success as he can wish, yet the innocent Person, with never so little of his own envies him not, and, if he has Nothing, fears him not.

LIKEWISE the Cheat, and fraudulent Person, is put to a thousand Shifts to palliate his Fraud, and to be thought an honest Man: But surely, there can be no greater Labour, than to be always dissembling, and forced to maintain a constant Disguise, there being so many Ways by which a smothered Truth is apt to blaze, and break out; the very Nature of Things making it not more natural for them *to be*, than to *appear as they be*. But he, who will be really honest, just, and sincere in his Dealings, needs take no Pains to be thought so; no more than the Sun need take any Pains to shine, or when he is up, to convince the World that it is Day.

AND here again, to bring in the Man of Luxury and Intemperance for his Share in the Pain and Trouble, as well as in the fore-mention'd Shame and Infamy of his Vice. Can any Toil or Day-labour, equal the Fatigue or Drudgery, which such an one undergoes, while he is continually pouring in Draught after Draught, and cramming in Morsel after Morsel, and that in Spite of Appetite and Nature, 'till he becomes a Burden to the very Earth that bears him; though not so great an one to that, but that (if possible) he is yet a greater to himself?

IN the the third and last place, the religious Person *walks upon surer Grounds* than the irreligious, in Respect of the very *Health of his Body*. Virtue is a Friend, and an Help to Nature, but Vice and Luxury destroys it, and the Diseases of Intemperance are the natural Product of the Sins of Intemperance

temperance. Whereas, on the other Side, a temperate, innocent Use of the Creature, never casts any one into a Fever, or a Surfeit. Chastity makes no Work for a Surgeon, nor ever ends in *Rottiness of Bones*. Sin is the fruitful Parent of Distempers, and *ill Lives* occasion *good Physicians*. Seldom shall one see in Cities, Courts and rich Families (where Men live plentifully, and eat and drink freely) that perfect Health, that athletick Soundness and Vigour of Constitution, which is commonly seen in the Country, in poor Houses, and Cottages, where Nature is their Cook, and Necessity their Caterer, and where they have no other Doctor, but the Sun and the fresh Air, and that such an One, as never sends them to the Apothecary. It has been observed in the earlier Ages of the Church, that none lived such healthful, and long Lives, as Monks and Hermits, who had sequestered themselves from the Pleasures and Plenties of the World to a constant Course of the severest Abstinence and Devotion.

NOR is Excess the only Thing by which Sin breaks Men in their Health, and the comfortable Enjoyment of themselves thereby, but many are also brought to a very ill and languishing Habit of Body, by mere Idleness; and Idleness is both itself a great Sin, and the Cause of many more. The Husbandman returns from the Field, and from Manuring his Ground strong and healthy, because innocent and laborious; you will find no Diet-drinks, no Boxes of Pills, nor Galley-pots, amongst his Provisions; no, he neither speaks nor lives French, he is not *so much a Gentleman* (forsooth.) His Meals are coarse and short, his Employment warrantable, his Sleep certain and refreshing, neither interrupted with the Lashes of a guilty Mind, nor the Aches of a crazy Body:

And



And when old Age comes upon him, it comes alone, bringing no other Evil with it but itself: But when it comes to wait upon a great and worshipful Sinner (who for many Years together has had the Reputation of *eating well*, and *doing ill*) it comes (as it ought to do, to a Person of such Quality) attended with a long Train and Retinue of Rheums, Coughs, Catarrchs, and Dropfies, together with many painful Girds and Achings, which are at least called *the Gout*. How does such an one go about, or is carried rather, with his Body bending inward, his Head *shaking*, and his Eyes always watering (instead of *weeping*) for the Sins of his ill-spent Youth! In a Word, Old Age seizes upon such a Person, like Fire upon a rotten House; it was rotten before, and must have fallen of itself; so that it is but one Ruin preventing another.

AND thus I have shewn the Fruits and Effects of Sin upon Men in this World. But peradventure it will be replied, that there are many Sinners who escape all these Calamities, and neither labour under any Shame or Disrepute, any Unquietness of Condition, or more than ordinary Distemper of Body, but pass their Days with as great a Portion of Honour, Ease, and Health, as any other Men whatsoever. But to this I answer.

*First*, THAT those Sinners who are in such a temporally happy Condition, owe it not to their Sins, but wholly to a benign Chance that they are so. Providence often disposes of Things by a Method beside, and above the Discourses of Man's Reason.

*Secondly*, THAT the Number of those Sinners, who by their Sins have been directly plunged into all the fore-mentioned Evils, is incomparably greater

greater than the Number of those, who, by the singular Favour of Providence, have escaped them. And,

*Lastly*, T H A T, notwithstanding all this, Sin has in itself a natural Tendency to bring Men under these Evils; and, if persisted in, will infallibly end in them, unless hindered by some unusual Accident, which no Man, acting rationally, can build upon. It is not impossible, but a Man may practise a Sin secretly, to his Dying-day; but it is Ten Thousand to One if the Practice be constant, but that some Time or other it will be discovered; and then the Effect of Sin discovered, must be Shame and Confusion to the Sinner. It is possible also, that a Man may be an old healthful Epicure; but I affirm also, that it is next to a Miracle, and the like is to be said of the several Instances of Sin, hitherto produced by us. In short, Nothing can step between them and Misery in this World, but a very great, strange, and unusual Chance, which none will presume of, who *walk surely*.

AND so, I suppose, that Religion cannot possibly be enforced (even in the Judgment of its best Friends, and most professed Enemies) by any farther Arguments, than what have been produced. For I have shewn, that whether the Principles of it be certain, or but probable, nay, though supposed absolutely false; yet a Man is sure of that Happiness in the Practice, which he cannot be in the Neglect of it; and consequently, that though he were really a *speculative Atheist*, yet if he would but proceed rationally, that is, if (according to his own Measures of Reason) he would but *love himself*, he could not however be a *practical Atheist*; nor live without GOD in this World, whe-  
ther

ther or no he expected to be rewarded by him in another.

AND now, to make some Application of the foregoing Discourse, we may, by an easy, but sure Deduction, gather from it these two Things :

*First*, THAT *that* prophane, atheistical, epicurean Rabble, whom the whole Nation so rings of, and who have lived so much to the Defiance of God, the Dishonour of Mankind, and the Disgrace of the Age which they are cast upon, are not (what they are pleased to think and vote themselves) the *wisest Men in the World*; for in Matters of Choice, no Man can be *wise* in any Course or Practice in which he is not *safe* too. But can these high Assumers, and Pretenders to Reason, prove themselves so, amidst all those *Liberties* and *Latitudes* of Practice which they take? Can they make it out against the common Sense of all Mankind, that there is no such Thing as a future Estate of Misery for such as have lived ill here? Or, can they persuade themselves, that their own particular Reason denying, or doubting of it, ought to be relied upon, as a surer Argument of Truth, than the universal, Reason of all the World besides affirming it? Every Fool may believe, and pronounce confidently; but wise Men will, in Matters of *Discourse*, conclude *firmly*, and, in Matters of *Practice*, act *surely*: And, if these will do so too in the Case now before us, they must prove it not only *probable* (which yet they can never do) but also *certain*, and past all doubt, that there is no Hell, nor place of Torment for the Wicked; or at least, that they themselves, notwithstanding all their licentious Practices, are not to be reckoned of that Number.



IN the mean Time, it cannot but be Matter of just Indignation to all knowing and good Men, to see a Company of lewd, shallow-brained Huffs, making Contempt of Religion the sole Badge and Character of Wit, Gallantry, and true Discretion; and then, over their Pots, and Pipes, claiming and engrossing all these to themselves; magisterially censuring the Wisdom of all Antiquity, scoffing at all Piety, and (as it were) new modelling the whole World. When yet, such as have had Opportunity to sound these Braggers thoroughly, by having sometimes endured the Pennance of their Company, have found them in Converse so empty and insipid, in Discourse so trifling and contemptible, that it is impossible but that they should give a Credit and an Honour, to whatsoever and whomsoever they speak against: They are, indeed, such as seem wholly incapable of entertaining any Design above the present Gratification of their Palates, and whose very Soul and Thoughts rise no higher than their Throats; but yet withal, of such a clamorous and provoking Impiety, that they are enough to make the Nation like *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* in their Punishment, as they have already made it too like them in their Sins. Certain it is, that Blasphemy and Irreligion have grown to that daring Height here of late Years, that had Men in any sober, civilized heathen Nation, spoke or done half so much in Contempt of their false Gods and Religion, as some in our Days and Nation, wearing the Name of Christians, have spoke and done against GOD and *Christ*, they would have been infallibly burnt at a Stake, as Monsters and publick Enemies of Society.

BUT, for all this, let Atheists and Sensualists satisfy themselves as they are able. The former of which will find, that as long as Reason keeps her

her Ground, Religion neither can, nor will lose hers. And for the sensual Epicure, he also will find, that there is a certain *living Spark* within him, which all the Drink he can pour in, will never be able to *quench*; nor will his rotten abused Body have it in its Power to convey any putrifying, consuming, rotting Quality to the Soul: No, there is no *Drinking*, or *Swearing*, or *Ranting*, or *Fluxing* a Soul out of its *Immortality*. But that must and will survive and abide, in Spight of Death and the Grave; and live for ever, to convince such Wretches, to their eternal Woe, that the so much repeated Ornament of their former Speeches, ( *God damn 'em* ) was commonly the truest Word they spoke, though least believed by them, while they spoke it.

2. THE other Thing deducible from the foregoing Particulars, shall be to inform us of the Way of attaining to that excellent Priviledge, so justly valued by those who have it, and so much talked of by those who have it not; which is, *Assurance*. *Assurance* is properly that Persuasion or Confidence, which a Man takes up of the Pardon of his Sins, and his Interest in God's Favour, upon such Grounds and Terms, as the Scripture lays down. But now, since the Scripture promises eternal Happiness and Pardon of Sin, upon the sole Condition of Faith, producing sincere Obedience, it is evident, that he only can plead a Title to this who performs the required Condition. And this is the only rational *Assurance*, which a Man can with any Safety rely, or rest himself upon.

OBEEDIENCE and *upright Walking* are such substantial, vital Parts of Religion, as, if they be wanting, can never be made up, or commuted for

by any Formalities of fantastick Looks or Language. And the great Question when we come hereafter to be judged, will not be, *How demurely have you looked? With what Length have you prayed?* and, *With what Loudness and Vehemence have you preached?* but, *How holily have you lived?* and, *How uprightly have you walked?* For this, and this only, (through the Merits of *Christ's* Righteousness) will come into Account, before that great Judge, who will pass Sentence upon every Man according to what he has done here in the *Flesh*, whether it be good, or whether it be evil; and there is no Respect of Persons with Him.

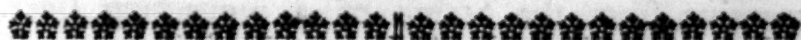






# S E R M O N V.

Preached before the University, at *Christ-Church, Oxford*, 1664.



JOHN XV. 15.

*Henceforth I call you not Servants; for the  
Servant knows not what his Lord doth:  
But I have called you Friends; for all  
Things that I have heard of my Father,  
have I made known unto you.*

**W**E have here an Account of *Christ's*  
Friendship to his Disciples; that is, we  
have the best of Things represented in  
the greatest of Examples. In other Men we see  
the Excellency, but in *Christ* the Divinity of  
Friendship. By our Baptism and Church Com-  
munion, we are made one Body with *Christ*; but  
by this we become one Soul.

LOVE is the greatest of human Affections, and  
Friendship is the noblest and most refined Im-  
provement

provement of Love; a Quality of the largest Compass. And here it is admirable to observe the ascending Gradation of the Love which *Christ* bore to his Disciples. The strange and superlative Greatness of which will appear from those several Degrees of Kindness that it has manifested to Man, in the several Periods of his Condition. As,

1. IF we consider him antecedently to his Creation, while he yet lay in the barren Womb of Nothing, and consequently could have Nothing to recommend him to *Christ's* Affection, nor shew any Thing lovely but what he should afterwards receive from the Stamp of a preventing Love. Yet even then did the Love of *Christ* begin to work, and to commence in the first Emanations and Purposes of Goodness towards Men; designing to provide Matter for itself to work upon, to create its own Object, and like the Sun, in the Production of some Animals, first to give a Being, and then to shine upon it.

2. LET us take the Love of *Christ* as directing itself to Man actually created, and brought into the World; and so all those glorious Endowments of human Nature, in its original State and Innocence, were so many Demonstrations of the munificent Goodness of Him, *by whom GOD first made*, as well as afterwards *redeemed the World*. There was a Consult of the whole Trinity for the Making of Man, that so he might shine as a Master-piece, not only of the Art, but also of the Kindness of his Creator; with a noble and a clear Understanding, a rightly disposed Will, and a Train of Affections regular and obsequious, and perfectly conformable to the Dictates of that high and divine Principle *right Reason*. So that, upon the

the whole Matter, he slept forth, not only the Work of God's Hands, but also the Copy of his Perfections; a Kind of Image, or Representation of the Deity in small; Infinity contracted into Flesh and Blood; and (as I may so speak) the Preludium and first Essay towards the Incarnation of the Divine Nature. But,

3. *And lastly*, LET us look upon Man, not only as created, and brought into the World, with all these great Advantages superadded to his Being; but also, as deprived and fallen from them, as an Outlaw, and a Rebel, and one that could plead a Title to Nothing, but to the highest Severities of a Sin-revenging Justice: Yet in this Estate also, the boundless Love of *Christ* began to have warm Thoughts, and Actings towards so wretched a Creature, at this Time not only not amiable, but highly odious.

WHILE indeed Man was yet uncreated and unborn, tho' he had no positive Perfection to present, and set him off to *Christ's* View, yet he was at least negatively clear: And, like unwritten Paper, tho' it has no Draughts to entertain, yet neither has it any Blots to offend the Eye, but is white, and innocent, and fair for an After-Inscription. But Man, once fallen, was nothing but a great Blur, nothing but a total universal Pollution, and not to be reformed by any Thing under a new Creation.

YET see here the Ascent and Progress of *Christ's* Love: For first, if we consider Man in such a loathsome and provoking Condition, was it not Love enough that he was spared and permitted to enjoy a Being? Since, not to put a Traytor to Death is a singular Mercy. But then, not only



to continue his Being, but to adorn it with Privilege, and from the Number of Subjects to take him into the Retinue of Servants, this was yet a greater Love. For every one that may be fit to be tolerated in a Prince's Dominions, is not therefore fit to be admitted into his Family; nor is any Prince's Court to be commensurate to his Kingdom. But then farther, to advance him from a Servant to a Friend, from only living in his House to lying in his Bosom, this is an Instance of Favour above the Rate of a created Goodness, an Act for none but the Son of God, who came to do every Thing in Miracle, to love super-naturally, and to pardon infinitely, and even to lay down the Sovereign, while He assumed the Saviour.

THE Text speaks the winning Behaviour, and gracious Condescension of *Christ* to his Disciples, in owning them for his Friends, who were more than sufficiently honoured by being his Servants. For still these Words of his must be understood, not according to the bare Rigour of the Letter, but according to the Allowances of Expression: Not as if the Relation of Friends had actually discharged them from that of Servants; but that of the two Relations, *Christ* was pleased to overlook the meaner, and without any Mention of that, to entitle and denominate them solely from the more honourable.

FOR the farther Illustration of which, we must premise this, as a certain and fundamental Truth, that so far as Service imports Duty and Subjection, all created Beings, whether Men or Angels, bear the necessary and essential Relation of Servants to God, and consequently to *Christ*, who is God *blessed for ever*: And this Relation is so necessary,  
that

that GOD Himself cannot dispense with it, nor discharge a rational Creature from it; for altho' consequentially indeed He may do so, by the Annihilation of such a Creature, and the taking away his Being; yet, supposing the Continuance of his Being, GOD cannot effect, that a Creature which has his Being from, and his Dependence upon Him, should not stand obliged to do Him the utmost Service that his Nature enables him to do. For, to suppose the contrary, would be opposite to the Law of Nature, which, consisting in a fixed unalterable Relation of one Nature to another, is, upon that Account, even by GOD Himself, indispensable: Forasmuch as having once made a Creature, He cannot cause that *that* Creature should not owe a natural Relation to his Maker, both of Subjection and Dependence, (the very Essence of a Creature importing so much) to which Relation if he behaves himself unsuitably, he goes contrary to his Nature, and the Laws of it; which GOD, the Author of Nature, cannot warrant without being contrary to Himself. From all which it follows, that even in our highest Estate of Sanctity and Privilege, we yet retain the unavoidable Obligation of *Christ's* Servants, tho' still with an Advantage as great as the Obligation, where *the Service is perfect Freedom*: So that with Reference to such a LORD, to serve, and to be free, are Terms not consistent only, but absolutely equivalent.

NEVERTHELESS, since the Name of Servants has of old been reckoned to imply a certain Meanness of Mind, as well as Lowness of Condition, and the ill Qualities of many who served, have rendered the Condition itself not very creditable; especially in those Ages and Places of the World, in which the Condition of Servants was extremely different

different from what it is now amongst us; they being generally Slaves, and such as were bought and sold for Money, and consequently reckoned but amongst the other Goods and Chattles of their Lord or Master: It was for this Reason that *Christ* thought fit to wave the Appellation of Servant here, as, according to the common Use of it amongst the *Jews*, (and, that Time, most Nations besides) importing these three Qualifications, which, being directly contrary to the Spirit of Christianity, were by no Means to be allowed in any of *Christ's* Disciples.

I. THE first whereof is that here mentioned in the Text, *viz.* an utter Unacquaintance with his Master's Designs; *the Servant knows not what his Lord doth.* For seldom does any Man of Sense make his Servant his Counsellor, for Fear of making him his Governor too. A Master for the most Part keeps his choicest Goods locked up from his Servant, but much more his Mind. A Servant is to know Nothing but his Master's Commands; and in these also not to know the Reason of them.

NEITHER is he to stand aloof from his Counsels only, but sometimes from his Presence also; and so far as Decency is Duty, it is sometimes his Duty to avoid him. But the Voice of *Christ* in his Gospel is, *Come to Me all ye that are heavy laden.* The Condition of a Servant staves him off to a Distance; but the Gospel speaks Nothing but Allurement, Attractives and Invitation. The Magisterial Law bids the Person under it, *Go, and he must go*: But the Gospel says to every Believer, *Come, and he cometh.* A Servant dwells remote from all Knowledge of his Lord's Purposes, he  
lives



lives as a Kind of Foreigner under the same Roof, a Domestick, and yet a Stranger too.

2. THE Name of Servant imports a slavish Awe of Mind; as it is in *Rom. viii. 5.* *GOD has not given us the Spirit of Bondage again to fear.* He who serves has still the low and ignoble Restraints of Dread upon his Spirit; which in Business, and even in the Midst of Action, cramps and ties up his Activity. He fears his Master's Anger, but designs not his Favour. *Quicken me (says David) with thy free Spirit.* It is the Freedom of the Spirit that gives Worth and Life to the Performance. But a Servant is commonly less free in Mind than in Condition; his very Will seems to be in Bonds and Shackles, and Desire itself under a Kind of Durance and Captivity. In all that a Servant does he is scarce a voluntary Agent. But when he serves himself: All his Services otherwise not flowing naturally from Inclination, but being drawn and forced from him. In any Work he is put to, let the Master withdraw his Eye, and he will quickly take off his Hand.

3. THE Appellation of a Servant imports a mercenary Temper, and denotes such an one as makes his Reward both the Motive and Measure of his Obedience. He neither loves the Thing commanded, nor the Person who commands it, but is wholly intent upon his own Emolument. All that is given him over and above what is strictly just and his Due, makes him rather worse than better. A Servant rarely ascribes what he receives to the mere Liberality of the Donor, but to his own Worth and Merit, and to the Need which he supposes there is of him; which Opinion alone will be sure to make any one of a mean servile Spirit insolent and intolerable.

AND

AND thus I have shewn what the Qualities of a Servant usually are (or at least were in that Country where our Saviour lived and conversed when He spake these Words) which, no Doubt, were the Cause why He would not treat his Disciples (whom He designed to be of a quite contrary Disposition) with this Appellation.

COME we therefore now in the next Place to shew what is included in that great Character, and Privilege which He was pleased to vouchsafe both to them and to all Believers, in calling and accounting them his Friends. It includes in it (I conceive) these following Things :

I. FREEDOM of Access. House and Heart, and all are open for the Reception of a Friend. The Entrance is not beset with solemn Excuses and lingering Delays ; but the Passage is easy and free from all Obstruction, and not only admits, but even invites the Comer. How different, for the most Part, is the same Man from himself, as he sustains the Person of a Magistrate, and as he sustains that of a Friend ! As a Magistrate or great Officer he locks himself up from all Approaches by the multiply'd Formalities of Attendance, by the Distance of Ceremony and Grandeur ; so many hungry Officers to be passed through, so many Thresholds to be saluted, so many Days to be spent in waiting for an Opportunity of, perhaps, but half an Hour's Converse.

BUT when he is to be entertained, whose Friendship, not whose Business, demands an Entrance, those Formalities presently disappear, all Impediments vanish, and the Rigors of the Magistrate submit to the Endearments of a Friend. He opens and yields himself to the Man of Business

ness with Difficulty and Reluctancy, but offers himself to the Visits of a Friend with Facility. The Reception of one is as different from the Admission of the other, as when the Earth falls open under the Incisions of the Plough, and when it gapes and greedily opens itself to drink in the Dew of Heaven, or the Refreshments of a Shower: Or there is as much Difference between them, as when a Man reaches out his Arms to take up a Burden, and when he reaches them out to embrace.

It is confessed, that the vast Distance that Sin had put between the offending Creature, and the offended Creator, required the Help of some great Umpire and Intercessor, to open him a new Way of Access to God; and this *Christ* did for us as a Mediator. But we read of no Mediator to bring us to *Christ*; for tho', being God by Nature, He dwells in the Height of Majesty, and the inaccessible Glories of a Deity, yet to keep off all Strangeness between Himself and the Sons of Men, He has condescended to a Cognation and Consanguinity with us, He has cloathed Himself with Flesh and Blood, that so He might subdue his Glories to a Possibility of human Converse. And therefore, he that denies himself an immediate Access to *Christ*, affronts Him in the great Relation of a Friend, and as opening Himself both to our Persons and to our Wants, with the greatest Tenderneſs, and the freest Invitation. There is none who acts a Friend by a Deputy, or can be familiar by Proxy.

2, THE second Privilege of Friendship is a favourable Construction of all Passages between Friends, that are not of so high and so malign a



Nature as to dissolve the Relation. *Love covers a Multitude of Sins*, says the Apostle, 1 Pet. iv. 8. When a Scar cannot be taken away, the next kind Office is to hide it. *Love is never so blind* as when it is to spy Faults. It is like the Painter, who being to draw the Picture of a Friend having a Blemish in one Eye, would picture only the other Side of his Face. It is a noble, and a great Thing to cover the Blemishes, and to excuse the Failings of a Friend; to draw a Curtain before his Stains, and to display his Perfections; to bury his Weaknesses in Silence, but to proclaim his Virtues upon the House-top. It is an Imitation of the Charities of Heaven, which, when the Creature lies prostrate in the Weakness of Sleep and Weariness, spreads the Covering of Night and Darkeness over it, to conceal it in that Condition: But as soon as our Spirits are refreshed, and Nature returns to its Morning Vigour, God then bids the Sun rise, and the Day shine upon us, both to advance and to shew that Activity.

It is the ennobling Office of the Understanding, to correct the fallacious and mistaken Reports of Sense, and to assure us that the Staff in the Water is strait, tho' our Eye would tell us it is crooked. So it is the Excellency of Friendship to rectify the Malignity of those Surmises, that would misrepresent a Friend, and traduce him in our Thoughts. Am I told that my Friend has done me an Injury, or that he has committed any indecent Action? Why, the first Debt that I both owe to his Friendship, and that he may challenge from mine, is rather to question the Truth of the Report, than presently to believe my Friend unworthy. Or, if Matter of Fact breaks out and blazes with too great an Evidence to be denied, or so much as doubted of; why, still there are other Lenitives that

that Friendship will apply, before it will be brought to the Rigours of a condemning Sentence. A Friend will be sure to act the Part of an Advocate, before he will assume that of a Judge. And there are few Actions so ill (unless they are of a very black Tincture indeed) but will admit of some Extenuation, at least from those common Topicks of human Frailty; such as are Ignorance Inadvertency, Passion or Surprize, Company or Solicitation; with many other such Things, which may go a great Way towards excusing the Agent, though they cannot absolutely justify the Action. All which Apologies for, and Alleviations of Faults, though they are the Heights of Humanity, yet they are not the Favours, but the Duties of Friendship. Charity itself commands us, where we know no Ill, to think well of all: But Friendship, that always goes a Pitch higher, gives a Man a peculiar Right and Claim to the good Opinion of his Friend. And, if we justly look upon a Proneness to find Faults, as a very ill Thing, we are to remember, that a Proneness to believe them is next to it.

WE have seen here the Demeanour of Friendship between Man and Man: But how is it, think we now, between *Christ* and the Soul that depends upon Him? Is He any Ways short in these Offices of Tenderness and Mitigation? No assuredly; but by infinite Degrees superior. For where our Heart does but relent, his melts; where our Eye pities, his Bowels yearn. How many Frowardnesses of ours does He smother, how many Indignities does He pass by, and how many Affronts does He put up at our Hands, because his Love is invincible, and his Friendship unchangeable? He rates every Action, every sinful Infirmary with the Allowances of Mercy; and never weighs the Sin, but toge-

ther with it He weighs the Force of the Inducement; how much of it is to be attributed to Choice, how much to the Violence of the Temptation, to the Stratagem of the Occasion, and the yielding Frailties of weak Nature.

SHOULD we try Men at that Rate that we try *Christ*, we should quickly find, that the largest Stock of human Friendship would be too little for us to spend long upon. But his Compassion follows us with an infinite Supply. He is GOD in his Friendship, as well as in his Nature, and therefore we sinful Creatures are not took upon Advantages, nor consumed in our Provocations.

SEE this exemplified in his Behaviour to his Disciples, while He was yet upon Earth: How ready was He to excuse and cover their Infirmities! At the last and bitterest Scene of his Life, when He was so full of Agony and Horror, and so had most Need of the Refreshments of Society, and the friendly Assistance of his Disciples; and when also He desired no more of them, but only for a while to sit up and pray with Him: Yet they, like Persons wholly untouched with his Agonies, and unmoved with his passionate Entreaties, forget both his and their own Cares, and securely sleep away all Concern for Him, or themselves either. Now what a fierce Reprehension may we imagine this would have drawn from the Friendships of the World! and yet what a gentle one did it receive from *Christ*! in *Matt. xxvi. 40.* No more than, *What could you not watch with Me one Hour?* And when from this Admonition they took only Occasion to redouble their Fault, and to sleep again, so that upon a second and third Admonition they had Nothing to plead for their unseasonable Drowsiness, yet then *Christ*, who was



was the only Person concerned to have resented and aggravated this their Unkindness, finds an Extenuation for it, when they themselves could not: *The Spirit is willing* (says He) *but the Flesh is weak*. As if He had said, "I know your Hearts, and am satisfied of your Affection, and therefore accept your Will, and compassionate your Weakness." So benign, so gracious is the Friendship of *Christ*, so answerable to our Wants, so suitable to our Frailties. Happy that Man who has a Friend to point out to him the Perfection of Duty, and yet to pardon him in the Lapses of his Infirmary.

3. THE third Privilege of Friendship is a Sympathy in Joy and Grief. When a Man shall have diffused his Life, his Self, and his whole Concernments so far, that he can weep his Sorrows with another's Eyes; when he has another Heart besides his own, both to share, and to support his Grievs, and when, if his Joy overflow, he can treasure up the Overplus in another Breast; so that he can, (as it were) shake off the Solitude of a single Nature, by dwelling in two Bodies at once, and living by another's Breath, this surely is the Height, the very Spirit and Perfection of all human Felicities.

IT is a true and happy Observation of that great Philosopher the Lord *Verulam*, that this is the Benefit of Communication of our Minds to others, *That Sorrows by being communicated grow less, and Joys greater*. And indeed, Sorrow, like a Stream, loses itself in many Channels; and Joy, like a Ray of the Sun, reflects with greater Ardour when it rebounds upon a Man from the Breast of his Friend.

Now Friendship is the only Scene, upon which the glorious Truth of this great Proposition, can be fully acted and drawn forth. Which indeed is

a summary Description of the Sweets of Friendship; and the whole Life of a Friend, in the several Parts and Instances of it, is only a more diffusive Comment upon, and a plainer Explication of this divine Aphorism. Friendship never restrains a Pleasure to a single Fruition: But such is the royal Nature of this Quality, that it still expresses itself in the Style of Kings, as *We do this*, or that; and this is *our* Happiness; and such or such a Thing belongs to *us*; when the immediate Possession of it is vested only in one. Nothing certainly in Nature, can so peculiarly gratify the noble Dispositions of Humanity, as for one Man to see another so much himself as to sigh his Grievs, and groan his Pains, to sing his Joys, and (as it were) to do and feel every Thing by Sympathy, and secret inexpressible Communications. Thus it is upon an human Account.

LET us now see, how *Christ* sustains and makes good this generous Quality of a Friend and this we shall find fully set forth to us, in *Heb. iv. 15.* where he is said to be a *merciful High Priest, touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities; and that in all our Afflictions he is afflicted*, *Isa. lxiii. 9.* And no Doubt, with the same Bowels and Meltings of Affections, with which any tender Mother hears and bemoans the Groanings of her sick Child, does *Christ* hear and sympathize with the spiritual Agonies of a Soul under Desertion, or the Pressure of some stinging Affliction. It is enough that He understands the exact Measures of our Strengths, and Weaknesses; that He knows our Frame; as it is in *Psal. ciii. 14.* And that He does not only know, but emphatically, that He remembers also *that we are but Dust*: Observe that signal Passage of his loving Commiseration; as soon as He had risen from the Dead, and met *Mary Magdalene*,  
in

in *Mark* xvi. 7. He sends this Message of his Resurrection by her. *Go tell my Disciples and Peter, that I am risen.* What! was not *Peter* one of his Disciples? Why then is he mentioned particularly, as if he were exempted out of their Number? Why, we know into what a Plunge he had newly cast himself by denying his Master; upon Occasion of which he was now struggling with all the Perplexities and Horrors of Mind imaginable, lest *Christ* might in like Manner deny and disown him before his Father, and so repay one Denial with another. Hereupon *Christ* particularly applies the Comforts of his Resurrection to him, as if He had said, *Tell all my Disciples,* but be sure especially to tell poor *Peter, that I am risen from the Dead*; and that, notwithstanding his Denial of Me, the Benefits of my Resurrection belong to him, as much as to any of the rest. This is the Privilege of the Saints, to have a Companion and Supporter in all their Miseries, in all the doubtful Turnings and doleful Passages of their Lives. In Sum, this Happiness does *Christ* vouchsafe to all His, that as a *Saviour* He once suffered for them, and that as a *Friend* He always suffers with them.

4. THE fourth Privilege of Friendship is that which is here specified in the Text, a Communication of Secrets. A Bosom-secret and a Bosom-friend are usually put together. And this from *Christ* to the Soul, is not only Kindness, but also Honour and Advancement; it is for him to vouch it one of his Privy-Council. Nothing under a Jewel is taken into the Cabinet. A Secret is the Apple of our Eye; it will bear no Touch, nor Approach; we use to cover Nothing, but what we account a Rarity. And therefore to communicate a Secret to any one, is to exalt him to one of the Royalties of Heaven: For none knows the Secrets



of a Man's Mind, but his GOD, his Conscience, and his Friend. Neither would any prudent Man let such a Thing go out of his own Heart, had he not another Heart besides his own to receive it.

Now it was of old a Privilege, with which GOD was pleased to honour such as served him at the Rate of an extraordinary Obedience, thus to admit them to a Knowledge of many of his great Counsels lock'd up from the Rest of the World. When GOD had designed the Destruction of *Sodom*, the Scripture represents Him as unable to conceal that great Purpose from *Abraham*, whom He always treated as his Friend, and Acquaintance; that is, not only with Love, but also with Intimacy and Familiarity, in *Gen. xviii. 17.* *And the LORD said, shall I hide from Abraham the Thing that I go about to do?* He thought it a Violation of the Rights of Friendship to reserve his Design wholly to Himself. And *St. James* tells us, in *Jam. ii. 23.* *that Abraham was called the Friend of GOD:* And therefore had a Kind of Claim to the Knowledge of his Secrets, and the Participation of his Counsels. Also in *Exodus xxxiii. 11.* It is said of GOD, *that He spoke to Moses as a Man speaketh to his Friend.* And that, not only for the Familiarity and Facility of Address, but also for the peculiar Communications of his Mind. *Moses* was with Him in the Retirements of the Mount, received there his Dictates, and his private Instructions, as his Deputy and Vice-roy; and when the Multitude and Congregation of *Israel* were thundered away, and kept off from any Approach to it, he was honoured with an intimate and immediate Admission. The Priests indeed were taken into a near Attendance upon GOD; but still there was a Degree of a nearer Converse, and the Interest of a Friend was above the Privilege of the highest Servant. In *Exod.*

xix. 24. *Thou shalt come up (says GOD) thou and Aaron with thee; but let not the Priests and the People break through to come up unto the LORD, lest the LORD break forth upon them. And if we proceed further, we shall still find a Continuation of the same Privilege: Psalm xxv. 14. The Secret of the LORD is with them that fear him. Nothing is to be conceal'd from the other Self. To be a Friend, and to be conscious, are Terms equivalent.*

Now if GOD maintained such Intimacies with those, whom He loved, under the Law, (which was a Dispensation of greater Distance) we may be sure that under the Gospel, (the very Nature of which imports Condescension and Compliance) there must be the same with much greater Advantage. And therefore when GOD *had manifested Himself in the Flesh*, how sacredly did He preserve this Privilege? How freely did *Christ* unbosom Himself to his Disciples? in *Luke viii. 10. Unto you (says He) it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of GOD: But unto others in Parables:* Such shall be permitted to cast an Eye into the Ark, and to look into the very *Holy of Holies*. And again in *Matt. xiii. 17. Many Prophets and righteous Men have desired to see those Things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those Things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* Neither did He treat them with these Peculiarities of Favour in the extraordinary Discoveries of the Gospel only, but all of those Revelations of the Divine Love, in Reference to their own personal Interest in it. In *Rev. ii. 17. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone, and in the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.* Assurance is a Rarity covered from the Inspection of the World. A Secret that none can know but GOD,  
and

and the Person that is blessed with it. It is writ in a private Character, not to be read, nor understood but by the Conscience, to which the Spirit of God has vouchsafed to decypher it. Every Believer lives upon an inward Provision of Comfort, that the World is a Stranger to.

5. The fifth Advantage of Friendship is Counsel and Advice. A Man will sometimes need not only another Heart, but also another Head besides his own. In Solitude there is not only Discomfort, but Weakness also. And that Saying of the Wise-man, *Eccles. iv. 10. Woe to him that is alone*, is verified upon none so much, as upon the friendless Person: When a Man shall be perplexed with Knots and Problems of Business and contrary Affairs; where the Determination is dubious, and both Parts of the Contrariety seem equally weighty, so that which Way soever the Choice determines, a Man is sure to venture a great Concern; how happy then is it to fetch in Aid from another Person, whose Judgment may be greater than my own, and whose Concernment is sure not to be less! There are some Passages of a Man's Affairs that would quite break a single Understanding: So many Intricacies, so many Labyrinths, are there in them, that the Succours of Reason fail, the very Force of it being lost in an actual Intention scattered upon several clashing Objects at once; in which Case the Interposal of a Friend is like the Supply of a fresh Party to a besieged, yielding City.

Now *Christ* is not failing in this Office of a Friend also. For in that illustrious Prediction of *Isa. ix. 6.* amongst the rest of his great Titles, He is called *mighty Counsellor*. And his Counsel is not only sure, but also free. It is not under the Gospel of *Christ*, as under some Laws of Men, where  
you



you must be forced to buy your Counsel, and often pay dear for bad Advice. No, *He is a Light to those that sit in Darkness.* And no Man sees the Sun, no Man purchases the Light, nor errs if he walks by it. The only Price, that *Christ* sets upon his Counsel is, that we follow it; and that we do that which is best for us to do. He is not only Light for us to see with. He is *Understanding to the Ignorant*, and *Eyes to the Blind*: And whosoever has both a faithful and discreet Friend, to guide him in the dark, slippery, and dangerous Passage of this Life, may carry his Eyes in another Man's Head, and yet see never the worse. In *Cor. i. 30.* the Apostle tells us, that *Christ* is made to us, not only *Sanctification and Redemption*, but *Wisdom* too: We are his Members, and it is but natural, that all the Members of the Body should be guided by the Wisdom of the Head.

AND therefore let every Believer comfort himself in this high Privilege, that in the great Things, that concern his eternal Peace, he is not left to stand or fall by the uncertain Directions of his own Judgment. No, sad were his Condition if he should be so, when he is to encounter an Enemy made up of Wiles and Stratagems, an old Serpent, and a long experienc'd Deceiver, and successful at the Trade for some Thousands of Years.

THE Inequality of the Match, between such an one, and the subtlest of Enemies would quickly appear by a fatal Circumvention: There must be a Wisdom from above to over-reach and master this hellish Wisdom from beneath. And this every sanctify'd Person is sure of in his great Friend, *in whom all the Treasures of Wisdom dwell.* Treasures that flow out, and are imparted freely both in Direction and Assistance to all that be long to Him. He never leaves

leaves any of His, perplex'd, amaz'd, or bewildered, where the Welfare of their Souls requires a better Judgment than their own, either to guide them in their Duty, or to disentangle them from a Temptation. Whosoever has *Christ* for his Friend, shall be sure of Counsel, and whosoever is his own Friend, will be sure to obey it.

6. THE last and crowning Privilege, or rather Property of Friendship is Constancy. He only is a Friend, whose Friendship lives as long as himself; who ceases to love, and to breathe at the same Instant. Not that I yet state Constancy in such an absurd, senseless, irrational Continuance in Friendship, as no Injuries, or Provocations whatsoever, can break off. For there are some Injuries that extinguish the very Relation between Friends. In which Case, a Man ceases to be a Friend, not from any Inconstancy in his Friendship, but from Defect of an Object for his Friendship to exert itself upon. It is one Thing for a Father to cease to be a Father, by casting off his Son; and another for him to cease to be so, by the Death of his Son. So in Friendship, there are some Passages of that high and hostile Nature, that they constitute and denominate the Person guilty of them, an Enemy; and if so, how can the other Person possibly continue a Friend, since Friendship essentially requires that it be between Two at least; and there can be no Friendship, where there are not two Friends?

NO-BODY is bound to look upon his Backbiter, or his Underminer, his Betrayer or his Oppressor, as his Friend. Nor indeed, is it possible, that he should do so, unless he could alter the Constitution and Order of Things, and establish a new Nature, and a new Morality in the World. For to remain insensible of such Provocations, is not Constancy

stancy, but Apathy. And therefore they discharge the Person, so treated, from the proper Obligations of a Friend; though Christianity, I confess, binds him to the Duties of a Neighbour.

BUT to give you the true Nature, and Measures of Constancy; it is such a Stability, and Firmness of Friendship, as over-looks and passes by all those lesser Failures of Kindness and Respect, that partly through Passion, partly through Indiscretion, and such other Frailties incident to human Nature, a Man may be sometimes guilty of, and yet still retain the same habitual Good-will, and prevailing Propensity of Mind to his Friend, that he had before. And whose Friendship soever is of that Strength, and Duration, as to stand its Ground against, and remain unshaken by such Assaults; (which yet are strong enough to shake down and annihilate the Friendship of little puny Minds) such an one (I say) has reached all true Measures of Constancy: His Friendship is of a noble Make, and a lasting Consistency; it resembles Marble, and deserves to be wrote upon it.

BUT how few Tempers in the World, are of that magnanimous Frame, as to reach the Heights of so great a Virtue? Many offer at the Effects of Friendship, but they do not last; they are promising in the Beginning, but they fail and jade, and tire in the Prosecution. For most People in the World are acted by Levity and Humour, and by strange and irrational Changes. And how often may we meet with those, who are one while courteous, civil, and obliging, but within a small Time after, are so supercilious, sharp, fierce, and exceptionous, that they are not only short of the true Character of Friendship, but become the very Bur-



thens of Society? Such low Dispositions, how easily are they discovered, how justly are they despised? But now that we may pass from one Contrary to another; *Christ, who is the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever, in his Being*, is so also in his *Affection*. He is not of the Number or Nature, of those mean Pretenders to Friendship, who perhaps will love and smile upon you one Day, and not so much as know you the next: Many of which Sort there are in the World, who are not so much courted outwardly, but that inwardly they are detested much more.

FRIENDSHIP is a Kind of Covenant; and most Covenants run upon mutual Terms and Conditions. And therefore so long as we fulfil the Condition on our Parts, we may be sure that *Christ* will not fail to fulfil every Thing on his. The Favour of Relations, Patrons, and Princes, is uncertain, and variable; and the Friendship which they take up, upon the Accounts of Judgment, and Merit, they most Times lay down out of Humour. But the Friendship of *Christ* has none of those Weaknesses, no such Hollowness or Unsoundness in it. *For neither Principalities nor Powers, Things present, nor Things to come*; no, nor all the Rage and Malice of Hell shall be able to pluck the meanest of *Christ's* Friends out of his Bosom.

Now from the Particulars hitherto discoursed of, we may learn these two Things,

(1.) The Excellency, and Value of Friendship. *Christ*, the Son of the most High God, the second Person in the glorious Trinity, took upon him our Nature, that he might give a great Instance and Example of this Virtue; and condescended to be a Man, only that he might be a Friend. Our Creator

tor, our Lord and King He was before ; but He would needs come down from all this, and in a Sort become our Equal, that he might partake of that noble Quality that is properly between Equals. *Christ* took not upon Him Flesh and Blood, that He might conquer and rule Nations, lead Armies, or possess Palaces ; but that He might have the Relenting, the Tenderneſs, and the Compaſſion of human Nature, which render it properly capable of Friendſhip ; and, in a Word, that He might have our Heart, and we have His. GOD Himſelf ſets Friendſhip above all Conſiderations of Kindred, as the greateſt Ground and Argument of mutual Endearment, in *Deut. xv. 6* *If thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or the Wife of thy Boſom, or thy Friend, which is as thine own Soul, entice thee to go and ſerve other Gods, thou ſhalt not conſent unto him.* The Emphaſis of the Expreſſion is very remarkable, it being a Gradation, or Aſcent, by ſeveral Degrees of Dearneſs, to that which is the higheſt of all. Neither Wife, nor Brother, Son, nor Daughter, though the neareſt in Cognation, are allowed to ſtand in Competition with a Friend ; who if he fully answers the Duties of that great Relation, is indeed better and more valuable, than all of them put together, and may ſerve inſtead of them ; ſo that he, who has a firm, a worthy, and ſincere Friend, may want all the reſt, without miſſing them. That which lies in a Man's Boſom, ſhould be dear to him ; but that which lies within his Heart, ought to be much dearer.

(2.) IN the next Place we learn from hence the high Advantage of being truly Religious. When we have ſaid and done all ; it is only the true Chriſtian, who is, or can be ſure of a Friend ; ſure of obtaining, ſure of keeping him. But as for the Friendſhip of the World ; when a Man ſhall have

done all he can do to make any one his Friend, employ'd the utmost of his Wit and Labour, beaten his Brains, and emptied his Purse, to create an Endearment between him and the Person, whose Friendship he desires, he may, in the End, upon all these Endeavours and Attempts, be forced to write Vanity and Frustration: For, by them all, he may at last be no more able to get into the other's Heart, than he is to thrust his Hand into a Pillar of Brass. The Man's Affection, amidst all these Kindnesses done him, remaining wholly unconcerned, and impregnable; just like a Rock, which being plied continually by the Waves, still throws them back into the Bosom of the Sea that sent them, but is not at all moved by any of them.

PEOPLE at first, while they are young and raw, and soft-natur'd, are apt to think it an easy Thing to gain Love, and reckon their own Friendship, a sure Price of another Man's: But when Experience shall have once open'd their Eyes, and shewed them the Hardness of most Hearts, the Hollownes of others, and the Baseness and Ingratitude of almost all, they will then find, that a Friend is the Gift of GOD; and that He only, who made Hearts, can unite them. For it is He who creates those Sympathies, and Suitablenesses of Nature, that are the Foundation of all true Friendship, and then by his Providence brings Persons so affected together.

It is an Expression frequent in Scripture, but infinitely more significant, than at first it is usually observ'd to be: Namely, *That GOD gave such or such a Person Grace or Favour in another's Eyes.* As for Instance, in *Gen. xxxix. 21.* it is said of *Joseph*, that the LORD was with him, and gave him *Favour in the Sight of the Keeper of the Prison.* Still it is an invisible Hand from Heaven, that ties this



this Knot, and mingles Hearts and Souls, by strange, secret, and unaccountable Conjunctions.

THAT Heart shall surrender itself, and its Friendship, to one Man, at first View, which another has, in vain, been laying Siege to for many Years, by all the repeated Acts of Kindnesses imaginable,

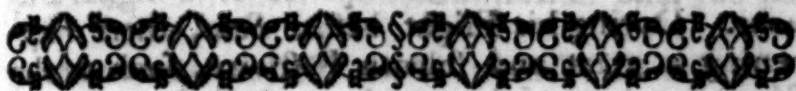
NAY, so far is Friendship from being of any human Production, that, unless Nature be pre-disposed to it, by its own Propensity or Inclination, no Arts of Obligation shall be able to abate the secret Dislike of some Persons towards others. No Friendly Offices, no Addresse, no Benefits whatsoever, shall ever alter or allay that diabolical Rancour, that frets and ferments in some hellish Breasts, but that upon all Occasions it will foam out at its foul Mouth in Slander and Invective, and sometimes bite too in a shrewd Turn or a secret Blow. This is true and undeniable upon frequent Experience; and happy those who can learn it at the Cost of other Men.

BUT now on the contrary, he who will give up his Name to *Christ* in Faith unfeigned, and a sincere Obedience to all his righteous Laws, shall be sure to find Love for Love, and Friendship for Friendship. The Success is certain and infallible; and none ever yet miscarried in the Attempt. For *Christ* freely offers his Friendship to all, and sets no other Rate upon so vast a Purchase, but only that we would suffer him to be our Friend. Thou perhaps spendest thy precious Time in waiting upon some great One, and thy Estate in presenting him; and, probably after all, hast no other Reward, but sometimes to be smiled upon, and always to be smiled at; and when thy greatest Occasions shall

call for Succour and Relief, then to be deserted and cast off, and not known.

**TURN** the Stream of thy Endeavours another Way, and bestow but half that hearty Attendance upon thy Saviour, in the Duties of Prayer and Mortification; study as much to please Him who died for thee, as thou dost to court and humour thy great Patron, who cares not for thee, and thou shalt make him thy Friend for ever; a Friend who shall own thee in thy lowest Condition, speak Comfort to thee in all thy Sorrows, counsel thee in all thy Doubts, answer all thy Wants, and in a Word, never leave thee nor forsake thee. But when all the Hopes that thou hast raised upon the Promises, or supposed Kindnesses of the great Ones of the World shall fail, and upbraid thee to thy Face, He shall then take thee into his Bosom, embrace, cherish, and support thee; and, as the Psalmist expresses it, *He shall guide thee with his Counsel here, and afterwards receive thee into Glory.*

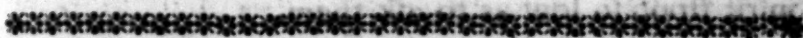




# S E R M O N VI.

*Prevention of Sin an invaluable  
Mercy.*

Preached at CHRIST-CHURCH, OXFORD,  
Nov. 10, 1673.



I SAM. XXV. 32, 33.

*And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the  
LORD GOD of Israel, who sent thee this Day  
to meet me. And blessed be thy Advice, and  
blessed be thou, who hast kept me this Day  
from coming to shed Blood, and from aveng-  
ing myself with my own Hand.*

**T**HESE Words are David's Retraction, or  
laying down a bloody and revengeful Re-  
solution; which, for a while, his Heart  
had swelled with, and carried him on with the  
highest Transport of Rage to prosecute: A Resolu-  
tion



tion took up from the Sense of a gross Indignity passed upon him, in Recompence of a signal Favour. During his Flight before *Saul*, there happening a great and solemn Festivity, such as the *Sheep-shearings* used to be in those Eastern Countries, he condescends, by an honourable Message, to beg of a rich and great Man some small Supply for himself and his poor harrassed Companions: And, as if the Greatness of the Asker, and the Smallness of the Thing asked, had not been sufficient to enforce his Request, he adds a Commemoration of his own generous and noble Usage of the Person whom he thus addressed to; shewing how he had been a Wall and a Bulwark to all that belonged to him, a Safeguard to his Estate, and a Keeper of his Flocks; and that both from the Violence of Robbers, and the Licence of his own Soldiers; who could much more easily have carved themselves their own Provisions, than so great a Spirit stoop so low as to ask them.

BUT in Answer to this, (as Nothing is so rude and insolent as a wealthy Rustick) all this his Kindness is overlooked, his Request rejected, and his Person most unworthily railed at. Such being the Nature of some base Minds, that they can never do ill Turns, but they must double them with ill Words. And thus *David's* Messengers are sent back to him, like so many Sharks and Runagates, only for endeavouring to complement an ill Nature out of itself, and seeking that by Petition, which they might have commanded by their Sword.

AND now, who would not but think, that such ungrateful Usage, heighten'd with such reproachful Language, might warrant the Justice of Revenge; even of such a Revenge as now began to boil in the Breast of this great Warrior? For, surely, if any  
 Thing

Thing can legalize Revenge, it should be Injuries from an extremely obliged Person. But for all this, Revenge, we see, is so much the Prerogative of the Almighty, that no Consideration can empower Men to assume the Execution of it in their own Case. And therefore *David*, by a happy and seasonable Pacification, being took off from acting that bloody Tragedy which he was just now entering upon, and so turning his Eyes from the Baseness of him who had stirred up his Revenge, to the Goodness of that GOD who had prevented it; he breaks forth into these triumphant Praises, expressed in the Text: *Blessed be the LORD GOD of Israel, who has kept me this Day from shedding Blood, and from avenging myself with my own Hand.*

WHICH Words, together with those going before in the same Verse, naturally afford us this doctrinal Proposition, that *Prevention of Sin is one of the greatest Mercies, that GOD can vouchsafe a Man in this World.*

THE Prosecution of which shall lie in these two Things:

*First, To prove the Proposition;*

*Secondly, To apply it.*

AND *First*, for the Proof of it: That transcendent Greatness of this *Sin-preventing Mercy* is demonstrable from these four following Considerations:

I. Of the Condition which the Sinner is in, when this Mercy is vouchsafed him.

2. Of

2. OF the Principle or Fountain from whence this *Prevention* of Sin does proceed.

3. OF the Hazard a Man runs if the Commis-  
sion of Sin be not *prevented*, whether ever it will  
come to be *pardoned*.

4. AND *lastly*, Of the Advantages accruing to  
the Soul from the *Prevention* of Sin, above what  
can be had from the bare *Pardon* of it, in Case it  
comes to be *pardoned*.

OF these in their Order. And, 1. We are to  
take an Estimate of the Greatness of this Mercy,  
from the Condition it finds the Sinner in, when  
GOD is pleased to vouchsafe it to him. It finds  
him in the direct Way to Death and Destruction;  
and, which is worse, wholly unable to help him-  
self. For he is actually under the Power of a  
Temptation, and the Sway of an impetuous Lust;  
both hurrying him on to satisfy the Cravings of it,  
by some wicked Action. He is possessed and acted  
by a Passion, which, for the present, absolutely  
over-rules him; and so can no more recover him-  
self, than a Bowl rolling down an Hill stop itself  
in the Midst of its Career.

IT is a Maxim in Philosophy, *That whatsoever  
is once in actual Motion, will move for ever, if it be  
not hindered*: So a Man, being under the Drift of  
any Passion, will still follow the Impulse of it, 'till  
Something interpose, and by a stronger Impulse  
turn him another Way: But in this Case we can  
find no Principle within him strong enough to  
counter-act that Principle. For, if it be any, it  
must be either, 1<sup>st</sup>, the Judgment of his Reason;  
or, 2<sup>dly</sup>, the free Choice of his Will.

BUT



BUT from the first of these there can be no Help for him in his present Condition. For, while a Man is engaged in any sinful Purpose, through the Prevalence of any Passion, during the Continuance of that Passion, he fully approves of whatsoever he is carried on to do in the Strength of it; and judges it, under his present Circumstances, the best and most rational Course that he can take. Thus we see, when *Jonas* was under the Passion of Anger, and GOD asked him, *Whether he did well to be angry?* He answered, *I do well to be angry even unto Death,* *Jonas* iv. 9. And when *Saul* was under his persecuting Fit, what he did appeared to him good and necessary, *Acts* xxvi. 9. *I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many Things contrary to the Name of Jesus.* But to go no farther than the Text: Do we not think, that while *David's* Heart was full of his revengeful Design, it had blinded and perverted his Reason so far, that it struck in wholly with his Passion, and told him, that the bloody Purpose he was going to execute was just, and becoming such a Person, and so dealt with as he was? This being so, how is it possible for a Man under a Passion to receive any Succour from his Reason, which is made a Party in the whole Action, and influenced to a present Approbation of all the ill Things which his Passion can suggest? This is most certain; and every Man may find it by Experience, (if he will but impartially reflect upon the Motions of his own Mind) that while he is under any Passion, he thinks and judges quite otherwise of the Objects of that Passion, from what he does, when he is out of it. Take a Man under the Transports of a vehement Rage or Revenge, and he passes a very different Judgment upon Murder and Blood-shed, from what he does when his Revenge is over, and the Flame of his Fury spent. Take a Man possessed with a strong  
and

and immoderate Desire of any Thing, and you shall find that the Worth and Excellency of that Thing appears much greater, and more dazzling to the Eye of his Mind, than it does when that Desire is extinguished. So that while Passion is upon the Wing, and the Man fully engaged in the Prosecution of some unlawful Object, no Remedy is to be expected from his Reason, which is wholly gained over to judge in Favour of it. The Fumes of his Passion do as really intoxicate and confound his discerning Faculty, as the Fumes of Drink decompose and stupify the Brain of a Man overcharged with it. When his Drink indeed is over, he sees the Folly and Absurdity, the Madness and Vileness of those Things, which before he acted with full Complacency and Approbation. Passion is the Drunkenness of the Mind; and therefore, in its present Workings not controllable by Reason; forasmuch as the proper Effect of it is, for the Time, to supersede the Workings of Reason.

THIS Principle therefore being able to do Nothing to the Stopping of a Man in the eager Pursuit of his Sin; there remains no other, that can be supposed able to do any Thing upon the Soul, but that *Second* mentioned, to wit, *The Choice of his Will*. But this also is as much disabled from recovering a Man fully intent upon the Prosecution of any of his Lusts, as the former. For all the Time that a Man is so, he absolutely wills, and is fully pleased with what he is going about. And whatsoever perfectly pleases his Will, over-powers it; for it fixes the Inclination of it to that one Thing which is set before it, and so there is no Room for Choice. He who is under the Power of Melancholy is pleased with his being so: He who is angry, delights in Nothing so much as in the venting of his Rage; and he who is lustful, places

his greatest Satisfaction in a slavish Following the Dictates of his Lust. And so long as the Will and the Affections are pleased, and gratified in any Course of Acting, it is impossible for a Man (so far as he is at his own Disposal) not to continue in it; or, by any Principle within him, to be diverted or took off from it.

FROM all which we see, that when a Man has *took up* a full Purpose of Sinning, he is hurried on to it in the Strength of all those Principles which Nature has given him to act by: For Sin having depraved his *Judgment*, and got Possession of his *Will*, there is no other Principle left him, by which he can make Head against it.

NOR is this all; but to these internal Dispositions to Sin, add the external Opportunities concurring with them, and removing all Letts and Rubbs out of the Way, and (as it were) making the *Path of Destruction plain before the Sinner's Face*; so that he may run his Course freely, and without Interruption. Nay, when Opportunities shall lie so fair, as not only to *permit*, but even to *invite* and *further* a Progress in Sin; so that the Sinner shall set forth, like a Ship launched into the wide Sea, not only well built and rigged, but also carried on with full *Wind* and *Tide*, to the Port or Place it is bound for: Surely in this Case, nothing under Heaven can be imagined able to stop or countermand a Sinner amidst all these Circumstances promoting and pushing on his sinful Design. For all that can give Force to Motion both from within and from without, jointly meet to bear him forward in his present Attempt. He presses on, like an *Horse rushing into the Battle*, all that should withstand him giving Way before him.



Now under this deplorable Necessity of Ruin and Destruction does GOD's *preventing Grace* find every Sinner, when it *snatches him like a Brand out of the Fire*, and steps in between the Purpose and the Commission of his Sin. It finds him going on resolutely in the *high and broad Way* to Perdition; which yet his perverted Reason tells him is *right*, and his Will *pleasant*: And therefore he has no Power of himself to leave or turn out of it; but he is ruined jocundly and pleasantly, and damned according to his Heart's Desire. And can there be a more wretched Spectacle of Misery, than a Man in such a Condition? A Man pleasing and destroying himself together; a Man (as it were) doing Violence to Damnation, and taking Hell by Force? So that when the *preventing Goodness* of God reaches out its Arm, and pulls him out of this fatal Path, it does by main Force even wrest him from himself, and save him as it were against his Will.

BUT neither is this his total Inability to recover or relieve himself the worst of his Condition; but, which is yet much worse, it puts him into a State of actual Hostility against, and Defiance of, that Almighty God, from whom alone, in this helpless and forlorn Condition, he is capable of receiving Help. For surely, while a Man is going on in a full Purpose of Sin, he is trampling upon all Law, spitting in the Face of Heaven, and provoking his Maker in the highest Manner; so that none is or can be so much concerned as GOD Himself, to destroy and cut off such as one, and to vindicate the Honour of his great Name, by striking him dead in his Rebellion.

AND this brings us to the *Second Thing* proposed, which was to shew, What is the *Fountain* or *impulsive Cause* of this Prevention of Sin. It is perfectly

fectly *Free Grace*. A Man at best, upon all Principles of Divinity, and sound Philosophy, is incapable of *meriting* any Thing from GOD. But surely, while he is under the Dominion of Sin, and engaged in a full Design and Purpose to commit it, it is not imaginable what can be found in him to oblige the Divine Grace in his Behalf. For he is in high and actual Rebellion against the only Giver of such Grace. And therefore it must needs flow from a redundant, unaccountable Fulness of Compassion; shewing Mercy, *because it will shew Mercy*; from a Compassion, which is, and must be its own Reason, and can have no Argument for its Exercise, but itself. No Man in the Strength of the *first Grace*, can *merit* the *second*, (as some fondly speak) unless a Beggar, by receiving one Alms, can be said to *merit* another. It is not from what a Man *is*, or what he has *done*; from any *Virtue* or *Excellency*, any preceding Worth or Desert in him, that GOD is induced thus to interpose between him and Ruin, and so stop him in his full Career to Damnation. No, says GOD, in *Ezek. xvi. 6*. *When I passed by, and saw thee polluted in thine own Blood, I said unto thee, Live; yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy Blood, Live.* The Spirit of GOD speaks this great Truth to the Hearts of Men with Emphasis and Repetition, knowing what an Aptness there is in them to oppose it. GOD sees a Man wallowing in his native Filth and Impurity, delivered over as an absolute Captive to Sin, polluted with its Guilt, and enslaved by its Power; and in this most loathsome Condition fixes upon him as an Object of his distinguishing Mercy. And to shew yet further, that the Actings of this Mercy, in the Work of *Prevention*, are entirely free; do we not sometimes see, in Persons of equal Guilt and Demerit, and of equal Progress and Ad-

vance in the Ways of Sin; some of them maturely diverted, and took off, and others permitted to go on without Check or Controll, 'till they finish a sinful Course in final Perdition? So true is it, that if Things were cast upon this Issue, that God should never prevent Sin 'till Something in Man deserved it, the best of Men would fall into Sin, continue in Sin, and sin on for ever.

AND thus much for the *Second* Thing proposed, which was to shew, *What was the Principle, or Fountain, from whence this Prevention of Sin does proceed.*

COME we now to the *Third* Proof of the Greatness of this *preventing Mercy*, taken from the *Hazard a Man runs, if the Commission of Sin be not prevented, whether ever it will come to be pardoned.*

IN order to the clearing of which, I shall lay down these two Considerations:

1. THAT if Sin be not thus prevented, it will certainly be committed; and the Reason is, because, on the Sinner's Part, there will be always a strong Inclination to Sin. So that, if other Things concur, and Providence cuts not off the Opportunity, the Act of Sin must needs follow. For an active Principle, seconded with the Opportunities of Action, will infallibly exert itself.

2. THE other Consideration is, That in every Sin deliberately committed, there are (generally speaking) many more Degrees of Probability, that *that* Sin will never come to be pardoned, than that it will.

AND



AND this shall be made appear upon these *three* following Accounts:

(1.) BECAUSE every Commission of Sin introduces into the Soul a certain Degree of Hardness, and an Aptness to continue in that Sin. It is a known Maxim, that it is much more difficult to *throw out*, than *not to let in*. Every Degree of Entrance, is a Degree of Possession, Sin taken into the Soul, is like a Liquor poured into a Vessel; so much of it as it fills, it also seasons. The Touch and Tincture go together. So that although the Body of the Liquor should be poured out again, yet still it leaves that Tang behind it, which makes the Vessel fitter for that, than for any other. In like Manner, every Act of Sin strangely transforms and works over the Soul to its own Likeness. Sin in this being to the Soul, like Fire to combustible Matter, it assimilates, before it destroys it.

(2.) A SECOND Reason is, because every Commission of Sin imprints upon the Soul a further Disposition and Proneness to Sin: As the second, third and fourth Degrees of Heat are more easily introduced, than the first. Every one is both a Preparative and a Step to the next. Drinking both quenches the present Thirst, and provokes it for the future. When the Soul is beaten from its first Station, and the Mounds and Outworks of Virtue are once broken down, it becomes quite another Thing from what it was before. In one single Eating of the forbidden Fruit, when the Act is over, yet the Relish remains; and the Remembrance of the first Repast, is an easy Allurement to the second. One Visit is enough to begin an Acquaintance; and this Point is gained by it, that when the Visitant comes again, he is no more a Stranger.

(3.) THE third and grand Reason is, because the only Thing that can lead the Sinner to Pardon, which is Repentance, is not in the Sinner's Power. And he who goes about the Work, will find it so. It is the Gift of GOD; and though GOD has certainly promised Forgiveness of Sin to every one who truly repents, yet He has not promised to any one to give him Grace to repent. This is the Sinner's hard Lot; that the same Thing which makes him need Repentance, makes him also in Danger of not obtaining it. For it provokes and offends that *Holy Spirit*, which alone can bestow his Grace. As the same Treason which puts a Traytor in Need of his Prince's Mercy, is a great and just Provocation to his Prince to deny him.

Now, let these three Things be put together: *First*, That every Commission of Sin, in some Degree, hardens the Soul in that Sin: *Secondly*, That every Commission of Sin disposes the Soul to proceed further in Sin: And, *Thirdly*, That to repent, and turn from Sin, (without which Pardon is impossible) is not in the Sinner's Power; and then, I suppose, there cannot but appear a greater Likelihood, that a Sin once committed, will, in the Issue, not be pardoned, than that it will. To all which, add the Confirmation of general Experience, and the real Event of Things, That where one Man ever comes to repent, an hundred, I might say a thousand, end their Days in final Impenitence.

ALL which considered, surely there cannot need a more pregnant Argument of the Greatness of this *preventing Mercy*; if it did no more than this, That his grand, immortal Concern, more valuable to him than ten thousand Worlds, is not thrown upon a critical Point; that he is not brought to his  
last

last Stake; that he is rescued from the first Descents into Hell, and the high Probabilities of Damnation.

FOR, whatsoever the Issue proves, it is certainly a miserable Thing to be forced to cast Lots for one's Life; yet in every Sin a Man does the same for Eternity. And therefore, let the boldest Sinner take this one Consideration along with him, when he is going to sin, That whether the Sin he is about to act ever comes to be pardoned or no; yet, as soon as it is acted, it quite turns the Balance, puts his Salvation upon the Venture, leaves him but one Cast for all; and, which is yet more dreadful, makes it ten to one Odds against him.

BUT, let us now alter the State of the Matter so, as to leave no Doubt in the Case: But suppose that the Sin, which upon Non-prevention comes to be committed, comes also to be repented of, and consequently to be pardoned.

YET in the *fourth* and *last* Place, The Greatness of this *preventing Mercy* is eminently proved from those Advantages accruing to the Soul, from the *Prevention of Sin*, above what can be had from the bare *Pardon* of it.

If Innocence be preferable to Repentance, and to be *clean* be more desirable than to be *cleansed*; then surely *Prevention* of Sin ought to have the Precedence of its *Pardon*. For, so much of *Prevention*, so much of Innocence. There are indeed various Degrees of it; and GOD in his infinite Wisdom does not deal forth the same Measure of his *preventing Mercy* to All. Sometimes He may suffer the Soul but just to begin the sinful Production, in reflecting upon a Sin suggested by the Imagination,



Imagination, with some Complacency and Delight; which, in the Apostle's Phrase, is *to conceive Sin*; and then, in these early, imperfect Beginnings, God perhaps may presently dash and extinguish it. Or, possibly, He may permit the sinful *Conception* to receive Life and Form, by passing into a Purpose of committing it; and then He may make it prove abortive, by stifling it before ever it comes to the Birth. Or, perhaps, God may think fit to let it come *even to the Birth*, by some strong Endeavours to commit it; and yet then deny it *Strength to bring forth*; so that it never comes into actual Commission. Or, lastly, God may suffer it to be born, and see the World, by permitting the Endeavour of Sin to pass into the Commission of it. And this is the last fatal Step but one; which is by frequent Repetition of the sinful Act, to continue and persist in it, 'till at length it settles into a fixed, confirmed Habit of Sin, which being properly that which the Apostle calls *the Finishing of Sin*, ends certainly in *Death*; Death, not only as to Merit, but also as to actual Infliction.

Now peradventure in this whole Progress, *preventing Grace* may sometimes come in to the poor Sinner's Help but at the *last Hour of the Day*; and having suffered him to run all the former Risk and Maze of Sin, and to descend so many Steps downwards to the black Regions of Death: As first, from the bare Thought and Imagination of Sin, to look upon it with some Beginnings of Appetite and Delight; from thence to purpose and intend it; and from intending to endeavour it; and from endeavouring actually to commit it; and having committed it, perhaps for some Time to continue in it. And then (I say) after all this, God may turn the fatal Stream, and by a mighty Grace interrupt its Course, and keep it from passing into a settled

settled Habit, and so hinder the absolute Completion of Sin in final Obduracy.

CERTAIN it is, that wheresoever it pleases God to stop the Sinner on this Side Hell, how far soever he has been advanced in his Way towards it, it is a vast, ineffable Mercy; a Mercy as great as Life from the Dead, and Salvation to a Man tottering with Horror upon the very Edge and Brink of Destruction. But if, more than all this, God shall be pleased by an early Grace to prevent Sin so soon, as to keep the Soul in the Virginity of its first Innocence, not tainted with the Desires, and much less deflowered with the formed Purpose of any Thing vile and sinful: What an infinite Goodness is this? It is not a *converting*, but a *crowning* Grace; such an one as irradiates, and puts a Circle of Glory about the Head of him upon whom it descends: It is the *Holy Ghost* coming down upon him *in the Form of a Dove*; and setting him triumphant above the Necessity of Tears and Sorrow, Mourning and Repentance, the sad After-games of a lost Innocence.

AND, thus much for the advantageous Effects of *preventing*, above those of *pardoning* Grace; which was the fourth and last Argument brought for the Proof of the Proposition.

PASS we now to the next general Thing proposed for the Prosecution of it; namely, *Secondly*, its Application: Which, from the foregoing Discourse, may afford us several Deductions, but chiefly by Way of Information, in these three Particulars.

*First*, THIS may convince us, how vastly greater a Pleasure is consequent upon the *Forbearance* of Sin, than can possibly accompany the *Commission* of it;

it; and, how much higher a Satisfaction is to be found from a *conquered*, than from a *conquering Passion*. For the Proof of which, we need look no farther than the great Example here before us. Revenge is certainly the most luscious Morsel that the Devil can put into the Sinner's Mouth. But, do we think that *David* could have found Half that Pleasure in the Execution of his Revenge, that he expresses here upon the Disappointment of it? Possibly it might have pleased him in the present Heat and Hurry of his Rage, but must have displeased him infinitely more in the cool, sedate Reflections of his Mind. For, Sin can please no longer, than for that pitiful Space of Time while it is committing; and surely the present Pleasure of a sinful Act, is a poor Countervail for the Bitterness of the Review, which begins where the Action ends, and lasts for ever. There is no ill Thing which a Man does in his Passion, but his Memory will be revenged on him for it afterwards.

ALL Pleasure springing from a gratified Passion, as most of the Pleasure of Sin does, must needs determine with that Passion: It is short, violent, and fallacious; and, as soon as the Imagination is disabused, will certainly be at an End. And therefore *Des Cartes* prescribes excellently well for the Regulation of the Passions, *viz.* That a Man should fix and fore-arm his Mind with this settled Persuasion, that, during that Commotion of his Blood and Spirits, in which Passion properly consists, whatsoever is offered to his Imagination in Favour of it, tends only to deceive his Reason: It is a real Trepan upon it; feeding it with Colours and Appearances, instead of Arguments; and driving the very same Bargain which *Jacob* did with *Esau*, *A Mess of Pottage for a Birthright*, a present Repast for a Perpetuity.

Secondly,



*Secondly*, WE have here a sure unfailing *Criterion*, by which every Man may discover and find out the gracious or ungracious Disposition of his own Heart. The Temper of every Man is to be judged of from the Thing he most esteems; and the Object of his *Esteem* may be measured by the prime Object of his *Thanks*. What is it, that opens thy Mouth in Praises, that fills thy Heart, and lifts up thy Hands in grateful Acknowledgments to thy great Creator and Preserver? Is it, that thy Bags and thy Barns are full, that thou hast escaped this Sickness, or that Danger? Alas, God may have done all this for thee in Anger! All this fair Sunshine may have been only to harden thee in thy Sins. He may have given thee Riches and Honour, Health and Power, with a Curse; and, if so, it will be found but a poor Comfort, to have had never so great a Share of God's *Bounty*, without his *Blessing*.

BUT, has He at any Time kept thee from thy Sin? Stopt thee in the Prosecution of thy Lust? Defeated the malicious Arts and Stratagems of thy mortal Enemy, the Tempter? And does not the Sense of this move and affect thy Heart more than all the former Instances of temporal Prosperity, which are but (as it were) the promiscuous Scatterings of his common Providence, while these are the distinguishing Kindnesses of his special Grace?

A TRULY pious Mind has certainly another Kind of Relish and Taste of these Things; and, if it receives a temporal Blessing with Gratitude, it receives a spiritual one with Extacy and Transport. *David*, an heroick Instance of such a Temper, overlooks the rich and seasonable Present of *Abigail*, though pressed with Hunger and Travel; but her Advice, which disarmed his Rage, and calmed

calmed his Revenge, draws forth those high and affectionate Gratulations from him: *Blessed be thy Advice, and blessed be thou, who hast kept me this Day from shedding Blood, and avenging myself with my own Hand.* These were his joyful and glorious Trophies; not that he triumphed over his Enemy, but that he insulted over his Revenge; that he escaped from himself, and was delivered from his own Fury. And whosoever has any Thing of David's Piety, will be perpetually plying the Throne of Grace with such like Acknowledgments, as, "*Blessed be that Providence, which delivered me from such a lewd Company, and such a vicious Acquaintance, which was the Bane of such and such a Person. And, Blessed be that GOD, who cast Rubs, and Stops, and Hindrances in my Way, when I was attempting the Commission of such or such a Sin; who took me out of such a Course of Life, such a Place, or such an Employment, which was a continual Snare and Temptation to me. And, Blessed be such a Preacher, and such a Friend, whom GOD made Use of to speak a Word in Season to my wicked Heart, and so turned me out of the Paths of Death and Destruction, and saved me in Spite of the World, the Devil and myself.*"

THESE are such Things as a Man shall remember with Joy upon his Death-bed; such as shall cheer and warm his Heart even in that last and bitter Agony, when many from the very Bottom of their Souls shall wish that they had never been rich, or great, or powerful; and reflect with Anguish and Remorse upon those splendid Occasions of Sin, which served them for little, but to heighten their Guilt, and at best to enflame their Accounts, at that great Tribunal which they are going to appear before.

IN the *third* and *last* Place, we learn from hence the great Reasonableness of not only a *contented*, but also a *thankful* Acquiescence in any Condition, and under the severest Passages of Providence, which can possibly befall us: Since there is none of all these but may be the Instrument of *preventing Grace* in the Hands of a merciful GOD, to keep us from those Courses which would otherwise assuredly end in our Confusion. This is most certain, that there is no Enjoyment which the Nature of Man is either desirous or capable of, but may be to him a direct Inducement to Sin, and consequently is big with Mischief, and carries Death in the Bowels of it. But to make the Assertion more particular, and thereby more convincing, let us take an Account of it with Reference to the three most valued Enjoyments of this Life.

*First*, HEALTH.

*Secondly*, REPUTATION: And,

*Thirdly*, WEALTH.

AND *First*, for Health. Has GOD made a Breach upon that? Perhaps He is building up thy Soul upon the Ruins of thy Body. Has he bereaved thee of the Use and Vigour of thy Limbs? Possibly He saw that otherwise they would have been the Instruments of thy Lusts, and the active Ministers of thy Debaucheries. Perhaps thy languishing upon thy Bed, has kept thee from rotting in a Goal, or in a worse Place. GOD saw it necessary by such Mortifications to quench the Boilings of a furious, overflowing Appetite, and the boundless Rage of an insatiable Intemperance; to make the Weakness of the *Flesh* the Physick and



Restorative of the *Spirit*; and, in a Word, rather to save thee, diseased, sickly and deformed, than to let Strength, Health and Beauty drive thee Headlong (as they have done many Thousands) into eternal Destruction.

*Secondly*, HAS GOD in his Providence thought fit to drop a Blot upon thy Name, and to blast thy Reputation? He saw perhaps that the Breath of popular Air was grown infectious, and would have derived a Contagion upon thy better Part. Pride and Vain-glory had mounted thee too high, and therefore it was necessary for Mercy to take thee down, to prevent a greater Fall. *A good Name is, indeed, better than Life*; but a sound Mind is better than both. Praise and Applause had swell'd thee to a Proportion ready to burst; it had vitiated all thy spiritual Appetites, and brought thee to feed upon the Air, and to surfeit upon the Wind, and, in a Word, to starve thy Soul only to pamper thy Imagination.

AND now, if GOD makes Use of some poignant Disgrace, to prick this enormous Bladder, and to let out the poisonous Vapour, is not the Mercy greater than the Severity of the Cure? *Cover them with Shame* (says the Psalmist) *that they may seek thy Name*. Fame and Glory transports a Man out himself; and, like a violent Wind, though it may bear him up for a while, yet it will be sure to let him fall at last: It makes the Mind loose and garish, scatters the Spirits, and leaves a Kind of Dissolution upon all the Faculties: Whereas *Shame* on the contrary (as all Grief does) naturally contracts and unites, and thereby fortifies the Spirits, and fixes the Ramblings of Fancy, and so reduces and gathers the Man into himself. This is the sovereign

sovereign Effect of a bitter Portion, administered by a wise and merciful Hand: And what Hurt can there be in all the Slanders, Obloquies and Disgraces of this World, if they are but the Arts and Methods of Providence to shame us into the Glories of the next? But then,

*Thirdly and lastly*, HAS GOD thought fit to cast thy Lot amongst the Poor of this World, and that either by denying thee any Share of the Plenties of this Life, (which is something grievous) or by taking them away, which is much more so? Yet still all this may be but the Effect of *preventing* Mercy. For so much Mischief as Riches have done, and may do to the Souls of Men, so much Mercy may there be in taking them away. For, does not the wisest of Men, next our Saviour, tell us of *Riches kept to the Hurt of the Owners of them?* *Eccles. vi. 13.* And does not our Saviour Himself speak of the intolerable Difficulty, which they cause in Mens Passage to Heaven? Do they not make the *narrow Way* much narrower; and contract the *Gate which leads to Life* to the Straitness of a *Needle's Eye*?

AND now, if GOD will fit thee for this Passage, by taking off thy Load, and emptying thy Bags, and so suit the Narrowness of thy Fortune to the *Narrowness of the Way* thou art to pass, is there any Thing but Mercy in all this? Nay, are not the *Riches* of his Mercy conspicuous in the *Poverty* of thy Condition?

THOU who repineest at the Plenty and Splendor of thy Neighbour, at the Greatness of his Incomes, and Magnificence of his Retinue; consider what are frequently the dismal Consequences of all this,

and thou wilt have little Cause to envy this gaudy great one, or to wish thyself in his Room.

FOR do we not often hear of this or that young Heir newly come to his Father's vast Estate? An happy Man, no Doubt! But, does not the Town presently ring of his Debaucheries? Are not his Riches and his Lewdnesses talk'd of together? And the Odiousness of the one, heightened and set off by the Greatness of the other? Are not his Oaths, his Riots, and other Villainies, reckoned by as many Thousands as his Estate?

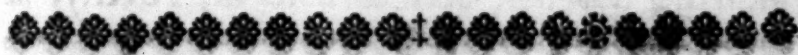
Now consider, had this grand Debaucher, this glistering Monster, been born to thy Poverty, he could not have contracted such a clamorous Guilt, he could not have been so bad: Nor, perhaps, had thy Birth instated thee in the same Wealth and Greatness, wouldst thou have been at all better.

THIS GOD foresaw and knew in the Ordering both of his and thy Condition: And which of the Two, can we think, is the greater Debtor to his *preventing* Mercy? Lordly Sins require Lordly Estates to support them: And where Providence denies the latter, it cuts off all Temptation to the former.

AND thus I have shewn by particular Instances, what Cause Men have to acquiesce in, and submit to the harshest Dispensations that Providence can measure out to them in this Life; and with what Satisfaction, or rather Gratitude, that ought to be *endured*, by which the greatest of Mischiefs is *prevented*. The great Physician of Souls, sometimes, cannot cure, without cutting us. Sin has fester'd inwardly,



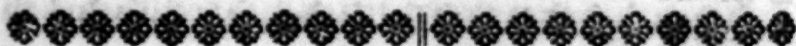
inwardly, and he must launce the Imposthume, to let out Death with the Suppuration. He who ties a Madman's Hands, or takes away his Sword, loves his Person, while he disarms his Frenzy. And whether by Health or Sicknes, Honour or Disgrace, Wealth or Poverty, Life or Death, Mercy is still contriving, acting, and carrying on the spiritual Good of all those who *love* God, and are *loved by Him*.





# S E R M O N VII.

Preached at *Christ-Church, Oxford*, before  
the University, *October 21, 1693.*



LUKE XI. 35.

*Take Heed therefore, that the Light which is  
in thee be not Darkness.*

**A**S Light is certainly one of the most glorious, and useful Creatures that ever issued from the Wisdom, and Power of the great Creator of the World; so were the Eye of the Soul as little weakned by the Fall, as the Eye of the Body, no Doubt the Light within us would appear as much more glorious than the Light without us, as the spiritual, intellectual Part of the Creation exceeds the Glories of the sensible, and corporeal.

I SHALL

I SHALL indifferently exprefs this Light by the Name of Conſcience (as a Term equivalent to it) in the following Particulars; but ſtill this ſhall be, with Reſpect to its informing, rather than to its obliging Office. Forasmuch as it is the former of theſe only which is the proper Effect of Light, and not the latter. For though Conſcience be both a Light, and (as it commands under GOD) a Law too; yet as it is a Light, it is not formally a Law. For if it were, then whatſoever it diſcover'd to us, it would alſo oblige us to. But this is not ſo; ſince it both may, and does diſcover to us the different Nature of many Things and Actions without obliging us either to the Practice or Forbearance of them; which one Conſideration alone is ſufficient to ſet the Difference between the enlightning and the obliging Office of Conſcience, clear beyond all Objection.

Now this Light, as it is certainly the great and ſovereign Gift of GOD to Mankind for the Guidance and Government of their Actions, in all that concerns them, with Reference to this Life, or a better; ſo it is alſo as certain, that it is capable of being turned into Darkneſs, and thereby made wholly uſeleſs for ſo noble a Purpoſe.

FOR ſo much the Words of the Text import; nor do they import only a bare Poſſibility, that it may be ſo, but alſo a very high Probability, that, without an extraordinary Prevention, it will be ſo. For as much as all Warning, in the very Reaſon of the Thing, and according to the natural Force of ſuch Expreſſion, implies it in theſe two Things. *Fiſt*, Some very conſiderable Evil, or Miſchief warned againſt; and *Secondly*, an equal Danger of falling into it: Without which all Warning would be not only ſuperfluous, but ridiculous.

Now



Now, both these, in the present Case, are very great; as will appear by a distinct Consideration of each of them. And

*First*, For the *Evil which we are warned or caution'd against*; to wit, *the turning of this Light within us into Darknes*. An Evil so unconceivably great, and comprehensive, that, to give an Account of the utmost Extent of it, would pose our Thoughts, as well as nonplus our Expressions. But yet to help our Apprehensions of it the best we can, let us but consider with ourselves those intolerable Evils which bodily Blindness, Deafness, Stupefaction, and an utter Deprivation of all Sense must unavoidably subject the outward Man to. For what is one, in such a Condition able to do? And what is he not liable to suffer? And yet Doing and Suffering, upon the Matter, comprehends all that concerns a Man in this World. If such an one's Enemy seeks his Life, in this forlorn Case, he can neither see, nor hear, nor perceive his Approach, 'till he finds himself actually in his murdering Hands. He can neither encounter, nor escape him, neither in his own Defence give, nor ward off a Blow: For whatsoever blinds a Man, *ipso facto* disarms him; so that being bereft both of his Sight and of all his Senses besides, what such an one can be fit for, unless it be to set up for Prophecy, or believe Transubstantiation, I cannot imagine.

THESE, I say, are some of those fatal Mischiefs, which corporal Blindness and Insensibility expose the Body to; and are not those of a spiritual Blindness unexpressibly greater? For must not a Man, labouring under this, be utterly at a Loss, how to distinguish between the two grand governing Concerns of Life, *Good* and *Evil*? And may not the Ignorance of these cost us as dear as the Knowledge  
of

of them did our first Parents? *Life and Death*, Vice and Virtue come alike to such an one; as all Things are of the same Colour to him who cannot see, His whole Soul is Nothing but Night, and Confusion, Darkness, and Indistinction. He cannot see the Way to Happiness, and how then should he avoid it? For where there is no Sense of Things, there can be no Distinction, and where there is no Distinction, there can be no Choice.

A MAN destitute of this directing and distinguishing Light within him, is and must be at the Mercy of every Thing in Nature, that would impose or serve a Turn upon him. So that whatsoever the Devil will have him do, that he must do. Whithersoever any exorbitant Desire or Design hurries him, thither he must go. Whatsoever any base Interest shall prescribe, that he must set his Hand to, whether his Heart goes along with it, or no. If he be a Statesman, he must be as willing to sell, as the Enemy of his Country can be to buy. If a Churchman, he must be ready to surrender, and give up the Church, and make a Sacrifice of the Altar itself though he live by it; and (in a Word) take that for a full Discharge from all his Obligations to do as he is bid. Which being the Case of such as steer by a false Light, certainly no Slave in the Gallies is or can be in such a wretched Condition of Slavery as a Man thus abandoned by Conscience, and bereft of all inward Principles, that should either guide or controul him in the Course of his Conversation. So that we see here the transcendent Greatness of the Evil which we stand caution'd against. But then,

*Secondly*, If it were an Evil that seldom happened, that very rarely beset a Man, this might in a great Measure supersede the Strictness of the Caution; but

but on the contrary, we shall find, that as great as the Evil is, which we are to fence against (and that is as great as the Capacities of an immortal Soul) the Greatness of the Danger is still commensurate: For it is a Case that usually happens; it is a Mischief as frequent in the Event, as it is fatal in the Effect. It is, as in a common Plague, in which the Infection is as hard to be escaped, as the Distemper to be cured: For that which brings this Darkness upon the Soul is Sin. And as the State of Nature now is, the Soul is not so close united to the Body, as Sin is to the Soul; indeed so close is the Union between them, that one would even think, the Soul itself (as much a Spirit as it is) were the *Matter*, and Sin the *Form* in our present Constitution. In a Word, there is a set Combination of all without a Man, and all within him, of all above Ground, and all under it, (if Hell be so) first to put out his Eyes, and then to draw or drive him Headlong into Perdition. From all which I suppose, we must needs see Reason more than sufficient for this Admonition of our Saviour, *take Heed that the Light which is in thee be not Darkness.* An Admonition founded upon no less a Concern, than all that a Man can save, and all that he can lose to Eternity. And thus having shewn both the Vastness of the Evil itself, and the extreme Danger we are in of it: Since no Man can be at all the wiser, or the safer for barely knowing his Danger, without a vigorous Application to prevent it; and since the surest Preventive of it, is to know by what Arts, and Methods, our Enemies will encounter us, and by which he is most likely to prevail over us, we will enquire into, and consider those Ways and Means by which he commonly attempts, and too frequently effects this so dismal a Change upon us, as to strip us even of the poor Remains of our fallen



fallen Nature, by turning the last surviving Spark of it, this Light within us, into Darknes.

FOR this must be acknowledged, that no Man living, in Respect of Conscience is born blind, but makes himself so. None can strike out the Eye of his Conscience but himself: For Nothing can put it out, but that which sins it out, And upon this Account, it must be confessed, that a Man may love his Sin so enormously, as by a very ill Application of the Apostle's Expression, even to *pluck out his own Eyes and give them to it*; as indeed every obstinate Sinner in the World does.

OUR present Business therefore shall be to shew how, and by what Courses, this Divine Light, this Candle of the LORD, comes first to burn faint and dim, and so by a gradual Decay fainter and fainter, 'till at Length by a total Extinction it quite sinks to Nothing, and so dies away. And this I shall do, *First*, in General, and *Secondly*, in Particular.

AND first in General, I shall lay down these two Observations.

*First*, that whatsoever defiles the Conscience, in the same Degree also darkens it.

As to the Philosophy of which, how and by what Way this is done, it is hard to conceive, and much harder to explain. Our great Unacquaintance with the Nature of spiritual, immaterial Beings leaving us wholly in the Dark as to any explicit Knowledge, either how they Work, or how they are worked upon. So that in discoursing of these Things we are forced to take up with Analogy, and Allusion, instead of Evidence and Demonstration. Ne-

Nevertheless the Thing itself is certain, be the Manner of effecting it never so unaccountable.

YET thus much we find, that there is something in Sin analogous to Blackness, as Innocence is frequently in Scripture, expressed, and sets forth to us by Whiteness. All Guilt blackens, (or does something equivalent to the blackening of) the Soul; as where Pitch cleaves to any Thing, it is sure to leave upon it both its Foulness and its Blackness together: And then we know that Blackness and Darkeness are inseparable.

SOME even of the old Heathens, (not without Countenance from *Aristotle* himself) hold, that besides the native, inherent Light of the Intellect (which is essential to it, as it is a Faculty made to apprehend its Object) there is also another Light, in the Nature of a Medium, beaming in upon it by a continual Efflux and Emanation from the great Fountain of Light, and irradiating this intellectual Faculty, together with the Representations of Things imprinted thereupon. According to which Doctrine it seems with great Reason to follow, that whatsoever interposes between the Mind and Irradiations from GOD, (as all Sin more or less certainly does) must needs hinder the Entrance and Admission of them into the Mind; and then Darkeness must by necessary Consequence ensue, as being Nothing else but the Absence, or Privation of Light.

FOR the further Illustration of which Notion, we may observe, that the Understanding, the Mind, or Conscience of Man (which we shall here take for the same Thing) seem to bear much the same Respect to GOD, which Glass or Chrystal does to the Light or Sun; which appears indeed to the Eye  
a bright

a bright and a shining Thing; nevertheless this Shining is not so much from any essential Light or Brightness existing in the Glass itself (supposing that there be any such in it) as it is from the Porousness of its Body, rendering it transparent, and thereby fit to receive and transmit those Rays of Light, which falling upon it, and passing through it, represent it to common View as a luminous Body. But now let any Thing of Dirt or Foulness fully this Glass, and so much of the Shine or Brightness of it is presently gone, because so much of the Light is thereby hindered from entering into it, and making its Way through it. But if, besides all this, you should also draw some black Colour, or deep Die upon it, either by Paint or otherwise; then no Brightness could be seen in it at all, but the Light being hereby utterly shut out, the Glass or Crystal would shine or glister no more than a Piece of Wood, or a Clod of Earth.

IN like Manner every Act of Sin, every Degree of Guilt, does in its Proportion cast a Kind of Soil or Foulness upon the intellectual Part of the Soul, and thereby intercepts those blessed Irradiations, which the Divine Nature is continually darting in upon it. Nor is this all, but there are also some certain Sorts and Degrees of Guilt, so very black and foul, that they fall like an huge thick Blot upon this Faculty; and so sinking into it, and settling within it, utterly exclude all those Illuminations, which would otherwise flow into it, and rest upon it from the great Father of Lights; and this not from any Failure, or Defect in the Illumination itself, but from the Indisposition of the Object, which being thus blacken'd, can neither let in, nor transmit the Beams, that are cast upon it.



I WILL not affirm this to be a perfect Exemplification of the Case before us, but I am sure it is a lively Illustration of it, and may be of no small Use to such as shall thoroughly consider it. But however (as I shew'd before) the Thing itself is certain and unquestionable, Guilt and Darknes being always so united, that you shall never find Darknes mentioned in Scripture in a moral Sense, but you shall also find it deriv'd from Sin, as its direct Cause, and join'd with it as its constant Companion: For, by a mutual Production, Sin both causes Darknes, and is caused by it. Let this therefore be our first general Observation; *That whatsoever pollutes or fouls the Conscience, in the same Degree also darkens it.*

Secondly, OUR other general Observation shall be this; *That whatsoever puts a Bias upon the Conscience: weakens, and, by Consequence, darkens the Light of it.* A clear and a right-judging Conscience must be always impartial; and that it may be so, it must be perfectly indifferent: That is, it must be free and disincumbered from every Thing, which may in the least sway, or incline it one Way, rather than another, beyond what the sole and mere Evidence of Things would naturally lead it to. In a Word, it must judge all by Evidence, and Nothing by Inclination.

AND this our blessed Saviour with admirable Emphasis and Significance of Expression calls the Singleness of the Eye. *If the Eye (says he) be single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light,* That is, Nothing extraneous must cleave to, or join with the Eye in the Act of Seeing, but it must be left solely, and entirely to itself, and its bare Object, as naked as Truth, as pure, simple, and unmixed as Sincerity. Otherwise the whole Operation of it unavoidably passes into Cheat, Fallacy, and Delusion.

As,

As, to make the Case yet more particular; if you put a Muffler before the Eye, it cannot see; if any Mote or Dust falls into it, it can hardly see; and if there be any Soreness or Pain in it, it shuns the Light and will not see. And all this by a very easy, but yet certain, and true Analogy, is applicable to the Eye of the Soul, the Conscience; and the Instance is verifiable upon it, in every one of the alleged Particulars.

IN short, whatsoever bends, or puts a Bias upon the Conscience, represents Things to it by a false Light; and whatsoever does so, causes in it a false and erroneous Judgment of Things. And all Error or Falshood is, in the very Nature of a real intellectual Darkness; and consequently must diffuse a Darkness upon the Mind, so far as it is affected and possessed with it. And thus much for our second general Observation.

FROM whence we shall now pass to Particulars. In the assigning and stating of which, as I shew'd before, that Sin in general was the general Cause of this Darkness, so the particular Causes of it must be fetched from the particular Kinds and Degrees of Sin.

Now Sin may be considered three Ways.

*First*, IN the Act.

*Secondly*, IN the Habit or Custom.

*Thirdly*, IN the Affection, or productive Principle of it.

IN all which we shall shew what a darkening and malign Influence Sin has upon the Conscience or Mind.

Mind of Man; and consequently with what extreme Care and severe Vigilance the Conscience ought to be guarded, and watched over in all these Respects. And,

*First*, For Sin considered in the single Act. Every particular Commission of any great Sin, such as are, for Instance, the Sins of Perjury, of Uncleaness, of Drunkenness, of Theft; and, above all, of Undutifulness to Parents, (which being a Thing so much against Nature, Nothing in Nature can be said for it:) These I say, and the like capital, soul-wasting Sins, even in any one single Act, have a strangely efficacious Power to darken the Conscience.

YEA, every single gross Act of Sin, is much the same Thing to the Conscience, that a great Blow or Fall is to the Head, it stuns and bereaves it of all Use of its Senses for a Time. Thus those Sins of *David*, so mazed and even stupified his Conscience, that it lay as it were in a Swoon, and void of all spiritual Sense for almost a whole Year. For we do not find, that he came to himself or to any true Sight or Sense of his horrid Guilt, 'till *Nathan* the Prophet came and roused him up with a Message from God; nor did *Nathan* come to him, 'till after the Child, begotten in that Adultery, was born. Such a terrible Deadness and Stupefaction did those two Sins bring upon his Soul for so many Months together, during which Time whatsoever Notion of Murder and Adultery *David* might have in general; yet no Doubt, he had but very slight, and superficial Thoughts of the Heinousness of his own in particular. And what was the Reason of this? Why, his Conscience was cast into a dead Sleep, and could not so much as open its Eyes, so as to be able to look either upwards or inwards.

This



This was his sad and forlorn Estate, notwithstanding that long Course of Piety and Converse with GOD, which he was now grown old in. For he had been an early Practiser, and an eminent Proficient in the Ways of GOD, and was now past the fiftieth Year of his Age; and yet, we see, that one or two such gross Sins dulled and deadned the Spiritual Principle within him to such a Degree, that they left him for a long Time (as it were) dozed and benumbed, blind and insensible; and, no doubt, had not a *peculiar Grace* from GOD raised him up and recovered him, he had continued so to his Life's End.

For this is most certain, and worth our best Observation; that whatsoever carries a Man off from GOD, will in the natural Course, and Tendency of it, carry him still further and further: 'till at length it leaves him neither Will nor Power to return. For Repentance is neither the *Design*, nor *Work* of meer Nature, which immediately after the Commission of Sin never puts a Man upon disowning or bewailing it; but upon studying how to palliate and extenuate, and rather than fail, how to plead for and defend it. This was the Course, which *Adam* took upon the first Sin: And the same Course in the same Case will be taken by all the Sons of *Adam* (if left to themselves) *as long as the World stands*.

*Secondly*, THE frequent and repeated Practice of Sin has also a mighty Power in it to obscure and darken the natural Light of Conscience. Nothing being more certainly true, nor more universally acknowledged than that *Custom of Sinning* takes away the *Sense* of Sin; and, we may add, the *Sight* of it too. For though the Darkness consequent upon any *one gross Act* of Sin, be (as we

have shewed) very great, yet that which is caused by Custom of Sinning, is much greater and more hardly curable. Particular Acts of Sin do (as it were) cast a Mist before the Eye of Conscience, but *customary* Sinning brings a Kind of Film upon it, and it is not an ordinary Skill which can take off that. The former only closes the Eye, but this latter *puts it out*; as leaving upon the Soul a wretched Impotence, either to *judge*, or to *do well*; much like the *Spots of the Leopard not to be changed*, or the *Blackness of an Æthiopian not to be washed off*. For by these very Things the Spirit of God in *Jer. xiii. 23.* expresses the *Iron* invincible Force of a wicked Custom.

Now the Reason, I conceive, that such a *Custom* brings such a *Darkness* upon the *Mind* or *Conscience*, is this, *That a Man naturally designs to please himself in all that he does*; and that it is impossible for him to find any Action really *pleasurable*, while he judges it absolutely *unlawful*; since the *Sting* of this must needs take off the *Relish* of the other, and it would be an intolerable Torment to any Man's Mind, to be always *doing*, and always condemning himself for what he does. And for this Cause, a Man *shuts his Eyes*, and *stops his Ears* against all that his Reason would tell him of the Sinfulness of that Practice, which long Custom, and Frequency has endeared to him. So that he becomes studiously, and affectedly ignorant of the *Illness* of the Course he takes, that he may the more sensibly taste the Pleasure of it. And thus, when an inveterate, imperious Custom has so overruled all a Man's Faculties, as neither to suffer his *Eyes to see*, nor his *Ears to hear*, nor his *Mind to think* of the *Evil* of what he does; that is, when all the Instruments of Knowledge are forbid to do their Office, *Ignorance* and *Obscurity* must needs be upon

upon the whole Soul. For when the *Windows* are stopped up, no wonder if the *Whole Room* be dark.

THE Truth is, such an habitual Frequency of Sinning, does (as it were) *bar* and *bolt* up the Conscience against the sharpest Reproofs, and the most convincing Instructions; so that when GOD by the *Thunder* of his Judgments, and the Voice of his Ministers has been ringing *Hell* and *Vengeance* into the Ears of such a Sinner, perhaps, like *Felix*, he may *tremble* a little for the present, and seem to yield, and fall down before the over-powering Evidence of the Conviction; but after a while, *Custom* overcoming Conscience, the Man goes his Way, and though he is convinced, and satisfied what *he ought to do*, yet he actually does *what he uses to do*: And all this, because through the Darknes of his Intellect he judges the *present Pleasure* of such a sinful Course, an *Over-balance* to the Evil of it.

AND what a *Darkness* and *Delusion* must Conscience needs be under, while it makes a Man judge that really best for him, which directly tends to, and generally ends in, his utter *Ruin* and *Damnation*! *Custom* is said to be a *second Nature*, and if by the *first* we are already so *bad*, by the *second* (to be sure) *we shall be much worse*.

Thirdly, EVERY corrupt *Passion*, or *Affection* of the *Mind*, will certainly pervert the *judging*, and obscure and darken the *discerning Power* of *Conscience*. The *Affections* which the *Greeks* call *Παθή*, and the *Latines* *Affectus Animi*, are of much the same Use to the Soul, which the *Members* are of to the Body; serving as the proper Instruments of most of its Actions; and are always attended with



with a certain *Motion of the Blood and Spirits* peculiar to each Passion, or Affection. And as for the *Seat* or *Fountain* of them, Philosophers both place them *in* and derive them *from* the *Heart*. But not to insist upon mere Speculations: The Passions or Affections are (as I may so call them) the mighty Flights and Sallyings out of the Soul upon such Objects as come before it; and are generally accompanied with such Vehemence, that the *Stoicks* reckoned them, in their very Nature and Essence, as so many Irregularities, and Deviations from *right Reason*, and by no Means incident to a *wise* or *good Man*.

BUT though better Philosophy has long since exploded this Opinion, and Christianity, which is the greatest and the best, has taught us, that, *that godly Sorrow* is neither a Paradox nor a Contradiction, 2 *Cor.* vii. 10. and consequently, that in every Passion or Affection there is something purely natural, which may both be *distinguished* and *divided* too from what is sinful and irregular; yet notwithstanding all this, it must be confessed, that the Passions are extremely apt to pass into *Excess*, and that when they do so, nothing in the World is a greater Hindrance to the *Mind* or *Reason* of Man, from making a true, clear, and exact Judgment of Things, than the Passions thus wrought up to any Thing of Ferment, or Agitation. It being as impossible to keep the judging Faculty steady in such a Case, as it would be to view a Thing *distinctly* and *perfectly* through a Perspective Glass, held by a shaking, paralytick Hand.

WHEN the *Affections* are once engaged, the *Judgment* is always partial. There is a strong Bent, or Bias upon it, it is possessed and gained over, and as it were see'd and retained in their Cause,

Cause, and thereby made utterly unable to carry such an equal Regard to the Object, as to consider Truth nakedly, and as such to make it the rigid inflexible Rule, which it is to judge by; especially where Duty is the Thing to be judged of. For a Man will hardly be brought to judge right, and true, when by such a Judgment he is sure to condemn himself.

BUT this being a Point of such high Importance, I will be yet more particular about it, and shew severally, in several vitious Affections, how impossible it is for a Man to keep his Conscience *rightly informed*, and fit to guide and direct him in all the arduous perplexing Cases of *Sin* and *Duty*, while he is actually under the Power of any of them. This I know Men, generally, are not apt to believe, or to think that the Failures of their Morals can at all affect their Intellectuals. But I doubt not but to make it not only credible, but undeniable.

Now the vitious Affections which I shall single out of those vast Numbers, which the Heart of Man, that great Storehouse of the Devil, abounds with, as some of the Principal, which thus darken and debauch the Conscience, shall be these three.

*First*, SENSUALITY. *Secondly*, Covetousness. *Thirdly*, Ambition.

OF each of which I shall speak particularly:  
And

*First*, FOR *Sensuality*, or a vehement Delight in, and Pursuit of bodily Pleasures. We may truly say of the Body, with Reference to the Soul, what was said by the Poet of an ill Neighbour, *Nemo tam*

*tam propè tam proculque*: None so nearly joined in Point of Vicinity, and yet so widely distant in Point of Interest and Inclinations.

THE antient Philosophers generally holding the Soul of Man to be a *spiritual immaterial* Substance, could give no Account of the several Defects in the Operations of it, (which they were sufficiently sensible of) but from its *Immerſion* into, and intimate Conjunction with *Matter*. And accordingly all their Complaints and Accusations were still levelled at this as the only Cause of all that they found amiss in the whole Frame and Constitution of Man's Nature. In a Word, whatsoever was observed by them, either irregular or defective in the Workings of the Mind, was all charged upon the Body, as its great Clog and Impediment. As the skilfullest Artist in the World would make but sorry Work of it, should he be forced to make Use of Tools no Way fit for his Purpose.

BUT whether the Fault be in the *spiritual* or *corporeal* Part of our Nature, or rather in *both*, certain it is, that no two Things in the World do more rise and grow upon the Fall of each other, than the *Flesh and the Spirit*: They being like a Kind of Balance in the Hand of Nature, so that as one mounts up, the other still sinks down; and the high Estate of the Body seldom or never fails to be the low, declining Estate of the Soul. Which great Contrariety and Discord between them, the Apostle describes, as well as Words can do, *Gal. v. 7. The Flesh* (says he) *lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusteth against the Flesh, and these two are contrary*, like two mighty Princes, whose Territories join, they are always encroaching, and warring upon one another. And, as it most commonly falls out, that the worse Cause has the best Success;



Success ; so when the Flesh and the Spirit comes to a Battle, it is seldom but the Flesh comes off victorious. And therefore the same great *Apostle*, who so constantly exercised himself to keep a Conscience void of Offence, did as constantly and severely exercise himself to keep under his Body, and bring it into Subjection, 1 Cor. ix. 27. And the same, in all Ages, has been the Judgment and Practice of all such as have had any Experience in the Ways of GOD. For bodily Pleasure dulls and weakens the Operations of the Mind, even upon a natural Account, and much more upon a Spiritual. Now the Pleasures which chiefly affect, or rather bewitch the Body, and by so doing become the Pest, and Poison, of the nobler and intellectual Part of Man, are those false and fallacious Pleasures of Lust and Intemperance :

OF each of which severally : And

*First, -For Lust.* NOTHING does, or can darken the Mind, or Conscience of Man more : Nay, it has a peculiar Efficacy this Way, and for that Cause may justly be ranked amongst the very Powers of *Darkness* : It being that which, (as Naturalists observe) strikes at the proper Seat of the Understanding, the *Brain*. Something of that *Blackness of Darkness* mentioned in the 13th of St. Jude, seeming to be of the very Nature, as well as Punishment of this Vice.

NOR does only the Reason of the Thing itself, but also the Examples of such as have been possessed with it, demonstrate as much.

FOR had not *Sampson* (think we) an intolerable Darkness and Confusion upon his Understanding, while he ran roving after every Strumpet in that  
brutish

brutish Manner that he did? Was it not the Eye of his Conscience which *Dalilah* first put out. And when the two Angels (as we read in *Gen. xix.*) struck those Monsters, the Men of *Sodom*, with *Blindness*, had not their own detestable Lust first stricken them with a greater? Or could *Herod* have ever thought himself obliged by the Religion of an Oath, to have murdered the *Baptist*, had not his Lust and his *Herodias* imprisoned and murdered his Conscience first? For, surely, the Common Light of Nature could not but teach him, that no Oath or Vow whatsoever could warrant the greatest Prince upon Earth to take away the Life of an innocent Person. But it seems his besotted Conscience having broken thro' the seventh Commandment, the sixth stood too near to it to be safe long: And therefore his two great Casuists, the Devil and *Herodias*, having allowed him to lie and wallow in Adultery so long, easily persuaded him that the same *Salvo* might be found out for Murder also. So that it was his Lust obstinately continued in, which thus darkened and deluded his Conscience; and the same will, no doubt, darken and delude, and, in the End, extinguish the Conscience of any Man breathing, who shall surrender himself up to it. The Light within him shall grow every Day less and less, and at length totally and finally go out. So hard, or rather utterly unfeasible it is for Men to be zealous Votaries of the blind God, without losing their Eyes in his Service.

FROM all which it appears, what a Folly it is for any one under the Dominion of his Lust, to think to have a right Judgment in Things relating to the State of his Soul: And the same, in the

SECOND

SECOND Place holds equally in that other Branch of Sensuality, *Intemperance*; whereupon we find them both joined together by the Prophet, *Hosea* iv. 11. *Whoredom* (says he) *and Wine take away the Heart*; that is, according to the Language of Holy Writ, a Man's judging and discerning Abilities. And therefore, whosoever would preserve these Faculties (especially as to their Discernment of spiritual Objects) quick and vigorous, must be sure to keep the upper Region of his Soul clear and serene; which the Fumes of Meat and Drink, luxuriously taken in, will never suffer it to be. We know the Method, which that high and exact Pattern of spiritual Prudence, *St. Paul* took to keep the great Centinel of his Soul, his Conscience, always vigilant and circumspect. It was by a constant and severe Temperance, heightened with frequent *Watchings* and *Fastings*, as he himself tells us, *2 Cor.* xi. 27. *In Watchings often, in Fastings often.* This was the Discipline which kept his Senses exercised to a sure and exquisite Discrimination of Good and Evil, and made the Lamp within him shine always with a bright and triumphant Flame.

BUT *Gluttony*, and all Excess, either in Eating or Drinking, strangely clouds and dulls the intellectual Powers; and then, it is not to be expected that the Conscience should bear up, when the Understanding is drunk down. An Epicure's Practice naturally disposes a Man to an Epicure's Principles; that is, to an equal Looseness in both: And he who makes his Belly his Business, will quickly come to have a Conscience of as large a Swallow as his Throat, of which there wants not several deplorable Instances. Loads of Meat and Drink are fit for none but a *Beast of Burden to bear*; and he is much the greater Beast of the two, who carries



ries his Burden in his Belly, than he who carries it upon his Back. On the contrary, nothing is so great a Friend to the Mind of Man, as *Abstinence*; it strengthens the Memory, clears the Apprehension, and sharpens the Judgment, and in a Word, gives Reason its full Scope of Acting; and when Reason has that, it is always a diligent and faithful Handmaid to Conscience. And therefore, where Men look no further than mere Nature, (as many do not) let no Man expect to keep his Gluttony and his Parts, his Drukenness and his Wit, his Revellings and his Judgment, and much less Conscience together. For neither Grace nor Nature will have it so. It is an utter Contradiction to the Methods of both, *Who hath Woe? who hath Sorrow? who hath Contentions? who hath Babbling? who hath Wounds without Cause? who hath Redness of Eyes?* says Solomon, Prov. xxiii. 29. Which Question he himself presently answers in the next Verse, *They who tarry long at the Wine, they who seek after mixt Wine.* So say I, who has a stupid Intellect, a broken Memory, and a blasted Wit, and (which is worse than all) a blind and benighted Conscience, but the Intemperate and Luxurious, the Epicure and the Smell-feast? So impossible is it for a Man to turn Sot, without making himself a Blockhead too. I know this is not always the present Effect of these Courses, but, at a long Run it will infallibly be so; and Time and Luxury together will as certainly change the Inside, as it does the Outside of the best Heads whatsoever; and much more of such Heads as are strong for Nothing but to bear Drink. And thus much for the first great Darkner of Man's Mind, *Sensuality*, and that, in both the Branches of it, *Lust* and *Intemperance*.

*Secondly,*

Secondly, ANOTHER vicious Affection, which clouds and darkens the Conscience, is *Covetousness*. Concerning which it may truly be affirmed, that of all the Vices incident to human Nature, none so powerfully and peculiarly carries the Soul downwards as Covetousness does. It makes it all Earth and Dirt, burying that noble Thing which can never die. So that while the Body is above Ground, the Soul is under it; and therefore must needs be in a State of Darkness, while it converses in the Regions of it.

How mightily this Vice darkens and debases the Mind, Scripture Instances abundantly shew. When *Moses* would assign the proper Qualifications of a Judge (which Office certainly calls for the quickest Apprehension, and the solidest Judgment) *Deut. xvi. 9. Thou shalt not* (says he) *take a Gift.* But why? He presently adds the Reason; *Because a Gift* (says he) *blinds the Eyes of the Wise.* And no Wonder, for it perverts their Will; and then, *who so blind as the Man who resolves not to see?* Gold, it seems, being but a very bad Help, and Cure of the Eyes in such Cases. In like Manner, when *Samuel* would set the Credit of his Integrity above all the Aspersions of Envy and Calumny itself, *1 Sam. xii. 3. Of whose Hands* (says he) *have I received a Bribe to blind my Eyes therewith?* Implying thereby, that for a Man to be gripe-handed and clear-sighted too was impossible. And again, *Eccl. vii. 7. A Gift* (says the Wiseman) *destroyeth the Heart:* That is, (as we have shewn already) the judging and discerning Powers of the Soul. By all which we see, that in the Judgment of some of the wisest and greatest Men that ever lived, such as *Moses, Samuel, Solomon,* *Covetousness* baffles and befools the Mind, blinds and confounds the reasoning Faculty, and that not

only in ordinary Persons, but even in the ablest, the wisest, and most sagacious. And to give you one Proof, above all, of the peculiar blinding Power of this Vice, there is not the most covetous Wretch breathing, who does so much as see or perceive that he is covetous.

FOR, the Truth is, preach to the Conscience of a covetous Person (if he may be said to have any) with the *Tongue of Men and Angels*, and tell him of the *Vanity of the World*, of *Treasure in Heaven*, and of the Necessity of being *rich toward God*, and liberal to his poor Brother; and it is all but flat, insipid, and ridiculous Stuff to him, who neither sees, nor feels, nor suffers any Thing to pass into his Heart, but through his Hands. You must preach to such an one of *Bargain and Sale*, *Profits and Perquisites*, *Principal and Interest*, *Use upon Use*; and if you can persuade him that Godliness is Gain in his own Sense, perhaps you may do Something with him; otherwise, tho' you edge every Word you speak with Reason and Religion, Evidence and Demonstration, you shall never affect, nor touch, nor so much as reach his Conscience; for it is kept sealed up in a Bag under Lock and Key, and you cannot come at it.

AND thus much for the second base Affection, that blinds the Mind of Man, which is *Covetousness*. A Thing directly contrary to the very Spirit of Christianity; which is a free, a large, and an open Spirit; a Spirit open to GOD and Man, and always carrying Charity in one Hand, and Generosity in the other.

Thirdly, THE third and last vile Affection which I shall mention (as having the same darkening Effect upon the Mind or Conscience) is *Ambition*.

For



For as *Covetousness* dulls the Mind by pressing it down too much below itself, so *Ambition* dazzles it by lifting it up as much above itself; but both of them are sure to darken the Light of it. For if you either look too intently down a deep Precipice upon a Thing at an extreme Distance below you, or with the same Earnestness fix your Eye upon Something at too great an Height above you, in both Cases you will find a Vertigo or Giddiness. And where there is a Giddiness in the Head, there will be always a Mist before the Eyes.

PRIDE, we know (which is always Cousin-German to *Ambition*) is commonly reckoned the Fore-runner of a Fall. It was the Devil's Sin, and the Devil's Ruin, and has been ever since the Devil's Stratagem, who like an experienced Wrestler usually gives a Man a Lift before he gives him a Throw. But how does he do this? Why, by first blinding him with *Ambition*; and when a Man either cannot, or will not mind the Ground he stands upon, he is easily jostled down, and thrust head-long into the next Ditch. The Truth is, in this Case Men seem to ascend to an high Station, just as they use to leap down a great Steep: In both Cases they shut their Eyes first, for in both the Danger is very dreadful, and the Way to venture upon it is not to see it.

YEA, so fatally does this towering, aspiring Humour intoxicate and impose upon Mens Minds, that when the Devil stands bobbing and tantalizing their gaping Hopes with some Preferment in Church or State, they shall do the basest, the vilest, and most odious Things imaginable; and that, not only in Defiance of Conscience, but, which is yet more impudent and intolerable, shall

P 3

even

only in ordinary Persons, but even in the ablest, the wisest, and most sagacious. And to give you one Proof, above all, of the peculiar blinding Power of this Vice, there is not the most covetous Wretch breathing, who does so much as see or perceive that he is covetous.

FOR, the Truth is, preach to the Conscience of a covetous Person (if he may be said to have any) with the *Tongue of Men and Angels*, and tell him of the *Vanity of the World*, of *Treasure in Heaven*, and of the Necessity of being *rich toward God*, and liberal to his poor Brother; and it is all but flat, insipid, and ridiculous Stuff to him, who neither sees, nor feels, nor suffers any Thing to pass into his Heart, but through his Hands. You must preach to such an one of *Bargain and Sale*, *Profits and Perquisites*, *Principal and Interest*, *Use upon Use*; and if you can persuade him that Godliness is Gain in his own Sense, perhaps you may do Something with him; otherwise, tho' you edge every Word you speak with Reason and Religion, Evidence and Demonstration, you shall never affect, nor touch, nor so much as reach his Conscience; for it is kept sealed up in a Bag under Lock and Key, and you cannot come at it.

AND thus much for the second base Affection, that blinds the Mind of Man, which is *Covetousness*. A Thing directly contrary to the very Spirit of Christianity; which is a free, a large, and an open Spirit; a Spirit open to God and Man, and always carrying Charity in one Hand, and Generosity in the other.

*Thirdly*, THE third and last vile Affection which I shall mention (as having the same darkening Effect upon the Mind or Conscience) is *Ambition*.

For

For as *Covetousness* dulls the Mind by pressing it down too much below itself, so *Ambition* dazzles it by lifting it up as much above itself; but both of them are sure to darken the Light of it. For if you either look too intently down a deep Precipice upon a Thing at an extreme Distance below you, or with the same Earnestness fix your Eye upon Something at too great an Height above you, in both Cases you will find a Vertigo or Giddiness. And where there is a Giddiness in the Head, there will be always a Mist before the Eyes.

PRIDE, we know (which is always Cousin-German to *Ambition*) is commonly reckoned the Fore-runner of a Fall. It was the Devil's Sin, and the Devil's Ruin, and has been ever since the Devil's Stratagem, who like an experienced Wrestler usually gives a Man a Lift before he gives him a Throw. But how does he do this? Why, by first blinding him with *Ambition*; and when a Man either cannot, or will not mind the Ground he stands upon, he is easily jostled down, and thrust head-long into the next Ditch. The Truth is, in this Case Men seem to ascend to an high Station, just as they use to leap down a great Steep: In both Cases they shut their Eyes first, for in both the Danger is very dreadful, and the Way to venture upon it is not to see it.

YEA, so fatally does this towering, aspiring Humour intoxicate and impose upon Mens Minds, that when the Devil stands bobbing and tantalizing their gaping Hopes with some Preferment in Church or State, they shall do the basest, the vilest, and most odious Things imaginable; and that, not only in Defiance of Conscience, but, which is yet more impudent and intolerable, shall



even alledge Conscience itself as the very Reason for the doing of them : And when they have done, shall wipe their Mouths, and with as bold a Front look the World in the Face, as if they expected Thanks for such Villainies, as a modest Malefactor would scarce presume to expect a Pardon for.

LET this therefore be fixed upon as a certain Maxim, that Ambition first blinds the Conscience, and then leads the Man whither it will, and that is in the direct Course of it, to the Devil.

I KNOW there are many more irregular and corrupt Affections belonging to the Mind of Man, and all of them in their Degree apt to darken and obscure the Light of Conscience. Such as are Wrath and Revenge, Envy and Malice, Fear and Despair, with many such others, even too many a great deal, to be crouded into one Discourse. But the three fore-mentioned (which we have been treating of) are, doubtless, the most predominant, the most potent in their Influence, and most pernicious in their Effect ; as answering to those three principal Objects, which, of all others, do the most absolutely command and domineer over the Desires of Men ; to wit, the Pleasures of the World working upon their Sensuality ; the Profits of the World upon their Covetousness ; and lastly, the Honours of it upon their Ambition. Which three powerful Incentives, meeting with these three violent Affections, are (as it were) the great Trident in the Tempter's Hand, by which he strikes through the very Hearts and Souls of Men ; or as a mighty *three-fold Cord*, by which he first hampers, and then draws the whole World after him, and that with such a rapid Swing, such an irresistible Fascination upon the Under-

Understandings, as well as Appetites of Men, that as GOD said heretofore, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*; so this proud Rival of his Creator, and Overturner of the Creation, is still saying in Defiance of Him, *Let there be Darknefs*, and accordingly *there is Darknefs*; *Darknefs* upon the Mind and Reason, *Darknefs* upon the Judgment and Conscience of all Mankind. So that Hell itself seems to be nothing else, but the Devil's finishing this his great Work, and the Consummation of that Darknefs in another World, which he had so fatally begun in this.

AND now, to sum up briefly the foregoing Particulars, you have heard of what vast and infinite Moment it is to have a clear, impartial, and right-judging Conscience: Such an one as a Man may reckon himself safe in the Directions of, as of a Guide that will always tell him Truth, and Truth with Authority; and that the Eye of Conscience may be always thus quick and lively, let constant Use be sure to keep it constantly open; and thereby ready and prepared to let in those Heavenly Beams, which are always streaming forth from GOD upon Minds fitted to receive them.

AND to this Purpose let a Man fly from every Thing which may leave either a Foulness or a Bias upon it; for the first will blacken, and the other will distort it, and both be sure to darken it. Particularly let him dread every gross Act of Sin; for one great Stab may as certainly and speedily destroy Life as forty lesser Wounds. Let him also carry a jealous Eye over every growing Habit of Sin; for Custom is an Over-match to Nature, and seldom conquered by Grace; and, above all, let him keep aloof from all Fellowship with

with any vicious and base Affection; especially from all Sensuality; which is not only the Dirt, but the black Dirt, which the Devil throws upon the Souls of Men: Accordingly let him keep himself untouched with the hellish, unhallowed Heats or Lust, and the noisome Steams and Exhalations of Intemperance, which never fail to leave a brutish Dulness and Infatuation behind them. Likewise, let him bear himself above that sordid and low Thing, that utter Contradiction to all Greatness of Mind, *Covetousness*; let him disenslave himself from the Pelf of the World, from that *Amor sceleratus habendi*; for all Love has something of Blindness attending it; but the Love of Money especially. And lastly, let him learn so to look upon the Honours, the Pomp and Greatness of the World, as to look through them too, Fools indeed are apt to be blown up by them, and to sacrifice all for them; sometimes venturing their very Heads, only to get a Feather in their Caps. But wise Men, instead of looking above them, chuse rather to look about them and within them, and by so doing, keep their Eyes always in their Heads, and maintain a noble Clearness in one, and Steadiness in the other. These, I say, are some of those Ways and Methods by which this great and internal Light, the judging Faculty of Conscience, may be preserved in its Vigour and Quickness. And to compleat the foregoing Directions by the Addition of one Word more; that we may the more surely prevent our Affections from working too much upon our Judgment, let us wisely beware of all such Things as may work too strongly upon our Affections.

*If the Light that is in thee be Darkness, (says our Saviour) how great must that Darknes need be?*

That

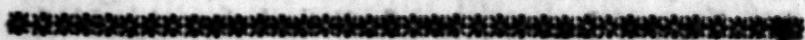


That is, how fatal, how destructive! And therefore I shall close up all with those other Words of our Saviour, John xii. *While you have the Light, walk in the Light*; so that the Way to have it (we see) is to walk in it. That is, by the Actions of a pious, innocent, well-governed Life, to cherish, heighten, and improve it; for still so much Innocence, so much Light: And on the other Side, to abhor and loath whatsoever may any Ways discourage and eclipse it; as every Degree of Vice assuredly will. And thus by continual feeding and trimming our Lamps, we shall find that this blessed Light within us, will grow every Day stronger and stronger, and flame out brighter and brighter, 'till at length having led us through this Vale of Darkness and Mortality, it shall bring us to those happy Mansions where there is Light and Life for evermore.





# SERMON VIII.



PROVERBS i. 32.

*The Prosperity of Fools shall destroy them.*

**I**T is a Thing partly worth our Wonder, partly our Compassion, that what the greatest Part of Men are most passionately desirous of, that they are generally most unfit for: For they look upon Things absolutely in themselves, without examining the Suitableness of them to their own Conditions; and so, at a Distance, court that as an Enjoyment, which upon Experience they find a great Calamity. And this peculiar ill Property has *Folly*, that it widens and enlarges Mens Desires, while it lessens their Capacities: Like a Dropsy, which still calls for Drink, but not affording Strength to digest it, puts an End to the Drinker, but not the Thirst.

As for the Explication of the Text, to tell you, that in the Dialect of Scripture, but especially of this Book of *Proverbs*, *Wicked Men* are called *Fools*,

*Fools*, and *Wickedness Folly*; as, on the contrary, that *Piety* is still graced with the Name of *Wisdom*, would be as superfluous, as to attempt the Proof of a self-evident Principle, or to light a Candle to the Sun. By *Fools* therefore are here represented all *wicked and vicious Persons*. Such as turn their Backs upon Reason and Religion, and wholly devoting themselves to Sensuality, follow the Sway and Career of their corrupt Affections.

THE Misery of which Persons is from hence most manifest, that when GOD gives them what they most love, they perish in the Embraces of it, are crushed to Death under the Heaps of Gold, stifled with an overcoming Plenty; like a Ship fetching rich Commodities from a far Country, but sinking by the Weight of them in its Return. Since therefore wicked Men are so strangely out in the Calculating of their own Interest, and account Nothing Happiness, but what brings up Death and Destruction in the Rear of it; and since Prosperity is yet, in itself, a real *Blessing*, though to them it becomes a *Mischief*, and determines in a *Curse*; it concerns us to look into the Reason of this strange Event, and to examine how it comes to pass, that *the Prosperity of Fools destroys them*.

THE Reasons of it I conceive may be these Three,

I. BECAUSE every foolish or vicious Person is either ignorant or regardless of the proper Ends and Uses, for which GOD designs *Prosperity*.

II. BECAUSE *Prosperity* (as the Nature of Man now stands) has a peculiar Force and Fitness to abate Mens Virtues, and to heighten their Corruptions.

III. AND



III. AND *Lastly*, Because it directly indisposes them to the proper Means of Amendment and Recovery.

I. AND *First*, one Reason why vicious Persons miscarry by *Prosperity*, is *because every such Person is either ignorant or regardless of the proper Ends and Uses for which GOD ordains and designs it.* Which Ends are these :

1. To try and discover what is in a Man. All Trial is properly Enquiry, and Enquiry is an Endeavour after the Knowledge of a Thing, as yet unknown ; and consequently, in Strictness of Speech, GOD who knows all Things, and can be ignorant of Nothing, cannot be said *to try*, any more than He can be said *to enquire*. But GOD, while He speaks to Men, is often pleased to speak after the Manner of Men ; and the Reason of this is not only his Condescension to our Capacities, but because in many Actions GOD behaves Himself with some Analogy to the Actings of Men. And therefore, because GOD sometimes sets those Things before Men, that have in them a Fitness to draw forth and discover what is in their Heart, as inquisitive Persons do, who have a Mind to pry into the Thoughts and Actions of their Neighbour, He is upon this Account said *to try* or *to enquire*, though, in Truth, by so doing, GOD designs not to inform Himself, but the Person whom He *tries*, and give both him and the World a View of his Temper and Disposition.

FOR the World is ignorant of Men, 'till Occasion gives them Power to turn their Insides outward, and to shew themselves. So that what is said of an *Office*, may be also said of *Prosperity* and a *Fortune*, that it does *indicare virum*, discover what the

the Man is, and what Metal his Heart is made of. We see a Slave perhaps cringe, and sneak, and humble himself, but do we therefore presently think that we see his Nature in his Behaviour? No, we may find ourselves much mistaken; for No-body knows, in Case Providence should think fit to smile upon such an one, and (as it were) to launch him forth into a deep and a wide Fortune, how quickly he would be another Man, assume another Spirit, and grow insolent, imperious, and insufferable.

NOR is this a Mystery hid only from the Eyes of the World round about a Man, but sometimes also even from himself; for he seldom knows his own Heart so perfectly, as to be able to give a certain Account of the future Disposition and Inclination of it, when placed under different States and Conditions of Life. He that has been bred poor, and grown up in a Cottage, knows not how his Spirits would move, and his Blood rise, should he come to handle full Bags, to see splendid Attendants, and to eat, drink, and sleep in State. Yet no Doubt, but by such great unlikely Changes, as also by lower Degrees of Affluence, Providence designs to sift, and search, and give the World some Experience of the Make and Bent of Mens Minds.

BUT now the vicious Person flies only upon the Bulk and Matter of the Gift, and considers not that the Giver has a Design upon him; the Consideration of which would naturally make Men cautious and circumspect in their Behaviour: For surely it is not an ordinary Degree of Intemperance, that would prompt a Man to drink intemperately before those, who he knows gave him his Freedom, only to try whether he would use it to Excess or no. God gave *Saul* a rich Booty upon the Conquest

VOL. XLIII. Q of

of *Amalek*, to try whether he would prefer real *Obedience* before pretended *Sacrifice*, and the performing of a *Command* before *spying upon the Spoil*: But his Ignorance of the Use, to which GOD designed that prosperous Event, made him let loose the Reins of his Folly and his Covetousness, even to the blasting of his Crown, and the taking the Scepter from his Family, 1 Sam. xv. 23. *Because thou hast rejected the Word of the LORD, (said Samuel to him) He hath also rejected thee from being King*: So that this was the Effect of his misunderstood Success, he conquered *Amalek*, but destroyed himself.

2. THE second End and Design of GOD in giving Prosperity, and of which all wicked Persons are either *ignorant* or *regardless*, is to encourage them in a constant, humble Expression of their Gratitude to the Bounty of their Maker, who deals such rich and plentiful Provisions to his undeserving Creatures. GOD would have every temporal Blessing raise that Question in the Heart, LORD, *what is Man, that Thou visitest him? or the Son of Man, that Thou so regardest him?* He never sends the Pleasures of the Spring, nor the Plenties of the Harvest, to surfeit, but to oblige the Sons of Men; and the very Fruits of the *Earth* are intended as Arguments to carry their Thoughts to *Heaven*.

BUT the wicked and sensual Part of the World are only concerned to find Scope and Room enough to wallow in; if they can but *have* it, whence they *have* it troubles not their Thoughts; saying *Grace* is no Part of their *Meal*; they feed and grovel like Swine under an Oak, filling themselves with the Mast, but never so much as looking up, either to the Boughs that bore, or the Hands that shook it down. This is their Temper and Deportment in the



the Midst of all their Enjoyments. But it is far from reaching the Purposes of the great Governor of the World, who makes it not his Care to gratify the Brutishness and Stupidity of evil Persons. He will not be their *Purveyor* only, but their *Instructor* also, and see them *taught*, as well as *fed* by his Liberality.

3. THE *third* End that GOD gives Men Prosperity for, and of which wicked Persons take no Notice, is to make them helpful to Society. No Man holds the Abundance of Wealth, Power, and Honour, that Heaven has blessed him with, as a *Proprietor*, but as a *Steward*, as the Trustee of Providence, to use and dispense it for the Good of those whom he converses with. For does any one think, that the Divine Providence concerns itself to lift him up to a Station of Power, only to insult and domineer over those who are round about him; and to shew the World how able he is to do a Mischief, or a shrewd Turn? No, GOD deposits (and He does but deposit) a Power in his Hand, to encourage Virtue, and to relieve oppressed Innocence; and, in a Word, to act as his Deputy, and as GOD Himself would do, should He be pleased to act immediately in Affairs here below.

GOD bids a great and rich Person rise and shine, as He bids the Sun; that is, not for himself, but for the Necessities of the World. And none is so honourable in his own Person, as he who is helpful to others. When GOD makes a Man wealthy and potent, He passes a double Obligation upon him; one, that He gives him Riches; the other, that He gives him an Opportunity of exercising a great Virtue; for surely, if GOD shall be pleased to make me his Almoner, and the Conduit by which his Goodness may descend upon my distressed

Q 2

Neighbour;

Neighbour; tho' the Charity be personally mine, yet both of us have Cause to thank GOD for it, I that I can be *virtuous*, and he that he is *relieved*.

BUT the wicked worldly Person looks no farther than himself; his *Charity ends at Home*, where it should *only begin*. He thinks that Providence fills his Purse and his Barns, only to pamper his own Carcase, to invite him to take his Ease and his Fill, that is, to serve his base Appetites with all the Occasions of Sin. It is not his Business to *do Good*, but only to *enjoy* it, and to *enjoy* it so, as to lessen it, by monopolizing and confining it. Whereupon being ignorant of the Purpose, it is no Wonder if he also abuses the *Bounty* of Providence, and so perverts it to *his own Destruction*.

II. THE *second* general Reason, *why the Prosperity of Fools proves destructive to them*, is, Because Prosperity (as the Nature of Man now stands) has a peculiar Force and Fitness to abate Mens Virtues, and to heighten their Corruptions.

I. AND *first*, for its abating their Virtues. Virtue, of any Sort whatsoever, is a Plant that grows upon no Ground, but such an one as is frequently tilled and cultivated with the severest Labour. But what a Stranger is Toil and Labour to a great Fortune? Persons possessed of this, judge themselves to have actually all that, for which Labour can be rational: For Men usually labour to be rich, great, and eminent. And these are born to all this, as to an Inheritance. They are at the Top of the Hill already; so that while others are climbing and panting to get up, they have Nothing else to do, but to lie down and sun themselves, and at their own *Ease* be Spectators of other Mens Labours.

BUT

BUT it is Poverty and Hardship that has made the most famed Commanders, the fittest Persons for Business, the most expert Statesmen, and the greatest Philosophers. For that has first pushed them on upon the Account of *Necessity*, which being satisfied, they have aimed a Step higher at *Convenience*; and so being at length inured to a Course of virtuous and generous Sedulity, Pleasure has continued that, which *Necessity* first began; till their Endeavours have been crowned with *Eminence*, *Masterhip*, and *Perfection* in the Way they have been engaged in.

BUT would the young effeminate Gallant, that never knew what it was to want his Will, that every Day cloaths himself with the Riches, and swims in the Delights of the World; would he, I say, chuse to rise out of his soft Bed at Midnight, to begin an hard and a long March, to engage in a crabbed Study, or to follow some tedious perplexed Business? No, he will have his Servants, and the Sun itself rise before him; when his Breakfast is ready, he will make himself ready too, unless perhaps sometimes his Hounds and his Huntsmen break his Sleep, and so make him *early* in order to his being *idle*.

HENCE we observe so many great Families to decay and moulder away through the Debauchery and Sottishness of the Heir: The Reason of which is, that the Possession of an Estate does not prompt Men to those severe and virtuous Practices, by which it was first acquired. The Grand-child perhaps games, and drinks, and whores himself out of those fair Lands, Manors, and Mansions, which his glorious Ancestors had fought or studied themselves into, which they had got by preserving their Country against an Invasion, by facing the Enemy



in the Field, hungry and thirsty, early and late, by preferring a brave Action before a sound Sleep, though Nature might never so much require it.

WHEN the Success and Courage of the *Romans* had made them Masters of the Wealth and Pleasures of all the conquered Nations round about them, we see how quickly the Edge of their Valour was dulled, and the rigorous Honesty of their Morals dissolved and melted away with those Delights, which too easily circumvent and overcome the Hearts of Men: So that instead of the *Camilli*, the *Fabricii*, the *Scipio's*, and such like Propagators of the growing Greatness of the *Roman* Empire, as soon as the Bulk of it grew vast and unlimited upon the Reign of *Augustus Cæsar*, we find a degenerate Race of *Caligula's*, *Nero's*, and *Vitellius's*, and of other inferior Sycophants and Flatterers, who neither knew nor affected any other Way of making themselves considerable, but by a servile adoring of the Vices and Follies of Great Ones above them, and a base treacherous informing against virtuous and brave Persons about them.

THE whole Business that was carried on with such Noise and Eagerness in that great City, then the Empress of the Western World, was Nothing else but to build magnificently, to feed luxuriously, to frequent Sports and Theatres, and, in a Word, to flatter and be flattered; the Effects of too full and unwieldy Prosperity. But surely they could not have had Leisure to think upon their *Mullets*, their *Lucrinian Oysters*, their *Phœnecoptors*, and the like; they could not have made a Rendezvous of all the Elements at their Table every Day, in such a prodigious Variety of Meats and Drinks; they could not, I say, have thus intended these Things, had the *Gauls* been besieging their *Capitol*, or *Han-*  
nibal

*nibal* at the Head of his *Carthaginian* Army *rapping* at their *Doors*: This would quickly have turned their *Spits* into *Swords*, and whet their *Teeth* too against their *Enemies*. But when *Peace*, *Ease* and *Plenty* took away these *Whetstones* of *Courage*, they insensibly slid into the *Asiatick* Softness, and were intent upon Nothing but their *Cooks*, and their *Ragous*, their fine *Attendants*, and unusual *Habits*; so that the *Roman* Genius was (as the *English* seems to be now) even lost and stifled, and the *Conquerors* themselves transformed into the *Guise* and *Garb* of the *Conquered*, 'till by *Degrees* the *Empire* shrivell'd and pined away; and from such a *Surfeit* of immoderate *Prosperity*, passed at length into a final *Consumption*.

NOR is this strange, if we consider *Man's Nature*, and reflect upon the great *Impotence* and *Difficulty* that it finds in advancing into the *Ways* of *Virtue* merely by itself, without some collateral *Aids* and *Assistances*, and such *Helps* as shall smooth the *Way* before it, by removing all *Hindrances* and *Impediments*. For *Virtue*, as it first lies in the *Heart* of *Man*, is but as a little *Spark*; which may indeed be blown into a *Flame*; it has that innate *Force* in it, that being cherished and furthered in its *Course*, the least *Particle* falling from a *Candle* may climb the *Top* of *Palaces*, waste a *City*, and consume a *Neighbourhood*. But then the *Suitableness* of the *Fuel*, and the *Wind* and the *Air* must conspire with its *Endeavours*: This is the *Breath* that must enliven and fan, and bear it up, 'till it becomes mighty and victorious. Otherwise, do we think, that *that* little Thing that falling upon *Thatch*, or a *Stack* of *Corn*, prevails so marvelously, could exert its *Strength* and its *Flames*, its *Terror* and its *Rage* falling into the *Dew* or the *Dust*? There it is presently checked,  
and

and left to its own little Bulk to preserve itself; which, meeting with no catching Matter, presently expires and dies, and become weak and insignificant.

IN like Manner, let us suppose a Man, according to his natural Frame and Temper, addicted to Modesty and Temperance, to virtuous and sober Course. Here is indeed Something improvable into a bright and a noble Perfection; God has kindled the Spark, sown the Seed, and we see the first Lineaments of a *Joseph* or a *Fabrizius*: But how has this little *Embryo* Strength enough to thrust itself into the World? To hold up its Head, and to maintain its Course to a perfect Maturity, against all the Assaults and Batteries of Intemperance; all the Snares and Trepanns that common Life lays in its Way to extinguish and suppress it? Can it abstain in the Midst of all the Importunities and Opportunities of Sensuality, without being confirmed and disciplined by long Hardships, severe Abridgments, and the Rules of Virtue frequently inculcated, and carefully pressed? No, we shall quickly find those hopeful Beginnings dashed and swallowed by such ruining Delights. Prosperity is but a bad Nurse to Virtue; a Nurse which is like to starve it in its Infancy, and to spoil it in Growth.

I COME now in the next Place to shew, that as it has such an Aptness to lessen and abate Virtue, so it has a peculiar Force also to heighten and enflame Mens Corruptions.

NOTHING shall more effectually betray the Heart into a Love of Sin, and a Loathing of Holiness, than an ill-managed Prosperity. It is like some Meats, the more luscious, so much the more dangerous.



dangerous. Prosperity and Ease upon an unsanctified, impure Heart, is like the Sun-beams upon a Dunghill, it raises many filthy, noisome Exhalations. The same Soldiers, who in hard Service, and in the Battle, are in perfect Subjection to their Leaders, in Peace and Luxury are apt to mutiny and rebel. That corrupt Affection which has lain, as it were, dead and frozen in the Midst of distracting Businessses, or under Adversity, when the Sun of Prosperity has shined upon it, then, like a Snake, presently recovers its former Strength and Venom. Vice must be caressed and smiled upon, that it may thrive and sting. It is starved by Poverty: It droops under the Frowns of Fortune, and pines away upon Bread and Water. But when the Channels of Plenty run high, and every Appetite is plied with Abundance and Variety, then the inbred Corruption of the Heart shews itself pampered and insolent, too unruly for Discipline, and too big for Correction.

WHICH will appear the better by considering those Vices, which more particularly receive Improvement by Prosperity.

I. AND the first is Pride. Who almost is there, whose Heart does not swell with his Bag? And whose Thoughts do not follow the Proportions of his Condition? What Difference has been seen in the same Man poor and preferred? His Mind, like a Mushroom, has shot up in a Night. His Business is first to forget himself, and then his Friends. When the Sun shines, then the Peacock displays his Train.

WE know when *Hezekiah's* Treasuries were full, his Armories replenished, and the Pomp of his Court rich and splendid, how his Heart was lifted up,

up, and what Vaunts he made of all to the *Babylonish* Embassadors, *Isa.* xxix. 2. Though in the End, as most proud Fools do, he smarted for his Ostentation. See *Nebuchadnezzar* also strutting himself upon the Survey of that Mass of Riches, and settled Grandeur, that Providence had blessed his Court with. It swelled his Heart, 'till it broke out at his Mouth in that Rodomontade, *Dan.* iv. 30. *Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the House of the Kingdom, by the Might of my Power, and for the Glory of my Majesty?* Now, that Prosperity, by fomenting a Man's Pride, lays a certain Train for his Ruin, will easily be acknowledged by him, who either from Scripture or Experience shall learn what a Spite Providence constantly owes the proud Person. He is the very Eye-sore of Heaven; and God even looks upon his own Supremacy as concerned to abase him.

2. ANOTHER Sin that is apt to receive Increase and Growth from Prosperity, is Luxury and Ungleanliness. *Sodom was a Place watered like the Garden of God, Gen.* xiii. 10. *There was in it Fulness of Bread, Ezek.* xvi. 49. and a redundant Fruition of all Things. This was the Condition of *Sodom*, and what the Sin of it was, and the dismal Consequence of that Sin, is too well known. The *Israelites* committing Fornication with the Daughters of *Moab*, which reaped down so many Thousands of them at once, was introduced with Feasting and Dancing, and all the Galleries and Festivities of a prosperous, triumphing People. We read of Nothing like Adultery in a persecuted *David* in the Wilderness; he fled here and there like a chaste Roe upon the Mountains, but when the Delicacies of the Court softened and ungirt his Spirit, when he drowzed upon his Couch, and sunned himself upon the Leads of his Palace; then it was that this great

great Hero fell by a Glance, and buried his Glories in his Neighbour's Bed; gaining to his Name a lasting Slur, and to his Conscience a fearful Wound.

As Solomon says of a Man surprized with Surfeit and Intemperance, we may say of every foolish Man immersed in Prosperity, *That his Eyes shall look upon strange Women, and his Heart shall utter perverse Things.* It is a tempting Thing for the Fool to be gadding abroad in a fair Day. *Dinah* knows not, but the Snare may be laid for her, and she return with a Rape upon her Honour, baffled, and deflowered, and robbed of the Crown of her Virginity. *Lot's* Daughters revelled and banqueted their Father into Incest.

THE unclean Devil haunts the Families of the rich, the gallant, and the high Livers; and there is Nothing but the Wisdom from above which descends upon strict, humble, and praying Persons, that can preserve the Soul pure and sound in the killing Neighbourhood of such a Contagion.

3. A THIRD Sin that Prosperity inclines the corrupt Heart of Man to, is Neglect of GOD in the Duties of Religion. Those who lie soft and warm in a rich Estate, seldom come to heat themselves at the Altar. It is a poor Fervour that arises from Devotion, in Comparison of that which sparkles from the generous Draughts, and the festival Fare which attend the Tables of the Wealthy and the Great. Such Men are (as they think) so happy, that they have no Leisure to be holy. They look upon Prayer as the Work of the Poor and the Solitary, and such as have Nothing to spend but their Time and themselves. If *Jesurun* wax fat, it is Ten to One but he will kick against him who made him so.

AND



AND now, I suppose, a Reflection upon the Premises cannot but press every serious Person with a Consideration of the ticklish Estate he stands in, while the Favours of Providence are pleas'd to breathe upon him in those gentle Gales. No Man is wholly out of the Danger which we have been discoursing of : For every Man has so much of Folly in him, as he has of Sin ; and therefore he must know, that his Foot is not so steady, but it may slip and slide in the oily Paths of Prosperity.

THE Treachery and Weakness of his own Heart may betray and insensibly bewitch him into the Love and Liking of a fawning Vice. What the Prophet says of Wine and Musick, may be also said of Prosperity, whose Intoxications are not all less, that it steals away the Heart. The Man shall find that his Heart is gone, though he perceives not when it goes.

And the Reason of all this is, because it is natural for the Soul in Time of Prosperity to be more careless and unbent ; and consequently not keeping so narrow a Watch over itself, is more exposed to the Invasions and Arts of its industrious Enemy. Upon which Account, the wise and the cautious will look upon the most promising Season of Prosperity with a doubtful and a suspicious Eye ; as bawaring, lest while it offers a Kiss to the Lips, it brings a Javelin for the Side ; many Hearts have been thus melted, that could never have been broke. This also may be a full, though a sad Argument to allay the foolish Envy, with which some are apt to look upon Men of great and flourishing Estates at a Distance : For how do they know, that what they make the Object of their Envy, is not a fitter Object for their Pity ? And that this glistering Person so much admired by them, is not now a prepar-  
ing

ing for his Ruin, and fattening for the Slaughters of Eternity? That he does not eat his Bane, and carouse his Poison? The poor Man perhaps is cursed into all his Greatness and Prosperity. Providence has put it as a Sword into his Hand, for the wounding and destroying of his own Soul: For he knows not how to use any of these Things; and so has only this Advantage, that he is damned in State, and goes to Hell with more Ease, more Flourish, and Magnificence than other Men.

AND thus much for the second general Reason, why the Prosperity of Fools proves fatal and destructive to them. I come now to the third and last, which is, Because Prosperity directly indisposes Men to the proper Means of their Amendment and Recovery.

1. As first, it renders them utterly averse from receiving Counsel and Admonition, *Jer. xxii. 21. I spake to thee in thy Prosperity, and thou saidst, I will not hear.* The Ear is wanton and ungoverned, and the Heart insolent and obdurate, 'till one is pierced, and the other made tender by Affliction. Prosperity leaves a Kind of Dulness and Lethargy upon the Spirit; so that the still Voice of God will not awaken a Man, but He must thunder and lighten about his Ears, before he will be brought to take Notice that God speaks to him. All the Divine Threatnings and Reprehensions beat upon such an one, but as Stubble upon a Brass Wall; the Man and his Vice stand firm, unshaken, and unconcerned; he presumes that the Course of his Affairs will proceed always as it does, smoothly, and without Interruption; *that To-morrow will be as To day, and much more abundant.* It is natural for Men in a prosperous Condition neither to love nor suspect a Change.

BUT besides, Prosperity does not only shut the Earth against Counsel, by Reason of the Dulness that it leaves upon the Senses; but also upon the Account of that Arrogance, and untutored Haughtiness that it brings upon the Mind; which of all other Qualities chiefly stops the Entrance of Advice, by making a Man look upon himself as too great and too wise, to admit of the Assistances of another's Wisdom. The richest Man will still think himself the wisest Man: And where there is Fortune, there needs no Advice.

2. **N** Prosperity utterly unfits such Persons for the many Trials of Adversity: Which yet **GOD** uses as the most proper and sovereign Means to correct and reduce a Soul grown vain and extravagant, by a long uninterrupted Felicity. But an un sanctified, unregenerate Person, passing into so great an Alteration of Estate, is like a Man in a Sweat entering into a River, or throwing himself into the Snow; he is presently struck to the Heart, he languishes, and meets with certain Death in the Change. His Heart is too effeminate and weak to contest with Want and Hardship, and the killing Misery of having been happy heretofore. For in this Condition, he certainly misbehaves himself one of these two Ways:

1. **H**E either faints and desponds, and parts with his Hope together with his Possessions: He has neither Confidence in Providence, nor Substance in himself, to bear him out, and buoy up his sinking Spirit, when Storms and Showers of an adverse Fortune shall descend, and beat upon him, and shake in Pieces the pitiful Fabrick of his earthly Comforts. The Earth he treads upon is his sole Joy and Inheritance; and that which supports his Feet, must support his Heart also; otherwise



wise he cannot, like *Job*, rest upon that Providence that places him upon a Dunghill.

2. SUCH a Person, if he does not faint and sink in Adversity, then on the contrary he will murmur and tumultuate, and blaspheme the GOD that afflicts him. A bold and a stubborn Spirit naturally throws out its Malignity this Way. It will make a Man die cursing and raving, and even breathe his last in a Blasphemy. No Man knows how high the Corruption of some Natures will work and foam, being provoked and exasperated by Affliction.

HAVING thus shewn the Reasons why Prosperity becomes destructive to some Persons; surely it is now but rational, in some brief Directions, to shew how it may become otherwise; and that is, in one Word, by altering the Quality of the Subject. Prosperity, I shewed, was destructive to Fools; and therefore the only Way for a Man not to find it destructive, is for him not to be a Fool; and this he may avoid by a pious Observance of these following Rules; As

1. LET him seriously consider upon what weak Hinges his Prosperity and Felicity hangs. Perhaps the cross falling of a little Accident, the Omission of a Ceremony, or the Misplacing of a Circumstance, may determine all his Fortunes for ever: Or perhaps his whole Interest, his Possessions, and his Hopes too, may live by the Breath of another, who may breathe his last To-morrow. And shall a Man forget GOD and Eternity for that which cannot secure him the Reversion of a Day's Happiness? Can any Favourite bear himself high and insolent upon the Stock of the largest Fortune imaginable,

imaginable, who has read the Story of *Wolfey* or *Sejanus*? Not only the Death, but the Humour of his Prince or Patron may divest him of all his Glories, and send him stripped and naked to his long Rest. How quickly is the Sun overcast, and how often does he set in a Cloud, and that Cloud break in a Storm! He that well considers this, will account it a surer Livelihood to depend upon the Sweat of his own Brow, than the Favour of another Man's. And even while it is his Fortune to enjoy it, he will be far from Confidence; Confidence, which is the Downfall of a Man's Happiness, and a Traitor to him in all his Concerns; for still it is the confident Person who is deceived.

2. LET a Man consider, how little he is bettered by Prosperity as to those Perfections which are chiefly valuable. All the Wealth of both the *Indies* cannot add one Cubit to the Stature either of his Body or his Mind. It can neither better his Health, advance his Intellectuals, or refine his Morals. We see those languish and die, who command the Physick and Physicians of a whole Kingdom. And some are Dunces in the Midst of Libraries, dull and sottish in the very Bosom of *Athens*; and far from Wisdom, tho' they lord it over the Wise.

FOR does he, who was once both poor and ignorant, find his Notions or his Manners any Thing improved, because perhaps his Friend or Father died and left him rich? Did his Ignorance expire with the other's Life? Or does he understand one Proposition in Philosophy, one Mystery in his Profession at all the more, for his keeping a Bailiff or a Steward? As great and as good a Landlord as he is, may he not for all this have

an empty Room yet to lett? And that such an one as is like to continue empty upon his Hands (or rather Head) for ever? If so, surely then none has Cause to value himself upon that which is equally incident to the worst and weakest of Men.

3. *AND lastly*, Let a Man correct the Gaities and Wandrings of his Spirit, by the severe Duties of Mortification. *Let him* (as *David* says) *mingle his Drink with Weeping*, and dash his Wine with such Water. Let him effect that upon himself by Fasting and Abstinence, which GOD would bring others to by Penury and Want. And by so doing, he shall disenslave and redeem his Soul from a Captivity to the Things he enjoys, and so make himself Lord, as well as Possessor of what he has. For Repentance supplies the Disciplines of Adversity; and Abstinence makes Affliction needless, by really compassing the Design of it upon the nobler Account of Choice: The Scarceness of some Meals will sanctify the Plenty of others.

THE wisest Persons in the World have often abridged themselves in the Midst of their greatest Affluence, and given Bounds to their Appetites, while they felt none in their Fortunes. And that Prince who wore Sackcloth under his Purple, wore the Livery of Virtue, as well as the Badge of Sovereignty; and was resolved to be good, in Spite of all his Greatness.

MANY other Considerations may be added, and these farther improved. But to sum up all in short; since Folly is so bound up in the Heart of Man, and since the Fool in his best, that is, in



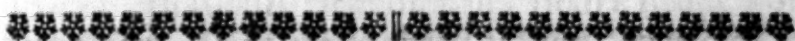
his most prosperous Condition, stands tottering upon the very Brink of Destruction, surely the great Use of the whole foregoing Discourse should be to remind us in all our Prayers, not so much to solicit GOD for any temporal Enjoyment, as for an Heart that may fit us for it; and that God would be the Chuser, as well as the Giver of our Portion in this World; who alone is able to suit and sanctify our Condition to us, and us to our Condition.





## S E R M O N IX.

Preach'd at *Westminster-Abbey*, on the 29th  
of *May*, 1672.



ROMANS ii. 33. latter Part.

— *How unsearchable are His Ways, and His  
Judgments past finding out.*

**T**HAT, which first brought a present Guilt,  
and entailed a future Curse upon Mankind,  
was an inordinate Desire of Knowledge.  
And from the Fall of *Adam* to this very Day, this  
fatal Itch has stuck so close to our Nature, that every  
one of his succeeding Race is infinitely eager, in-  
quisitive, and desirous to know and judge, where  
he is called only to adore, and to obey. By  
which we see, that it was this restless Appetite of  
Knowing, which made the earliest and boldest En-  
croachment upon the Divine Prerogative; setting  
Man up not only as a Rebel, but also as a Rival to  
his

his Maker ; and from behaving himself as his Creature, encouraging him to become his Competitor. And could there be an higher and more direct Defiance of the Almighty, under the peculiar Character of LORD and Governor of the Universe, than to a pitiful, short-sighted Creature, prying into the Reserves of Heaven ; and one, who was but Dust in his Constitution, and of a Day's standing at most, aspiring to an Equality with his Creator in one of his Divinest Perfections ? All know, that even in human Governments there is hardly any one of them, but have its *Arcana Imperii*, its hidden Rules and Maxims, which the Subjects of it must by no Means be acquainted with, but yield to their Force, without examining their Contrivance. And if so, how much a more unpardonable Absurdity, as well as Insolence, must it needs be for those, who commonly stand at so great a Distance, even from the little Mysteries of human Policies, to say like their grand Exemplar and Counsellor *Lucifer*, *I will ascend and look into the Secrets of the most High*, rip up and unravel all the Designs and Arts of Providence in the Government of the World ; as if (forsooth) they were of the Cabinet to the Almighty, were privy to all his Decrees, and, in a Word, held Intelligence with his Omniscience. For no less than all this, was or could be imply'd in our first Parents affecting to be as Gods ; the main Thing, which by Advice of the Serpent, they were then so set upon, and so furiously desirous of.

WHEREAS, on the Contrary, that great Repository of all Truth and Wisdom, the Scripture, is in Nothing more full and frequent, than in representing the infinite Transcendency of GOD's Ways and Actings above all created Intellectuals. *Such Knowledge is too wonderful for me*, says David, Psal. cxxxviii. 6. *And thy Judgments are a great Deep*, Psal.



Pfal. xxxvi. 6. And GOD *has put Darkneſs under his Feet*, Pfal. xviii. 9. And *His Ways are in the great Waters, and his Footſteps are not known*, Pfal. lxxvii. 19. In all which Paſſages could any Thing be expreſſed with more Life and Emphaſis? For He, who treads upon the Waters, leaves no Impreſſion; and he, who walks in the Dark, falls under no Inſpection. There is ſtill a Cloud, a thick Cloud, about GOD's greateſt and moſt important Works; and a Cloud (we know) is both high and dark, it ſurpaſſes our Reach, and determines our Sight; we may look upon it, but it is impoſſible for us to look through it. In a Word, if we conſult either the Reports of Scripture, or of our own Experience, about the wonderful, amazing, Events of Providence, eſpecially in the ſetting up, or pulling down of Kings and Kingdoms, tranſplanting Churches, deſtroying Nations, and the like; we ſhall find the Reſult of our cloſeſt Reasonings, and moſt exact Enquiries, concluding in an humble Non-plus, and ſilent Submission to the over-powering Truth of this Exclamation of our Apoſtle? *How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his Way paſt finding out.*

THE glorious Subject of this Day's Commemoration, is an eminent Inſtance of the Methods of Providence ſurpaſſing all human Apprehenſion; And as it is a very great one itſelf, ſo was it brought forth by a numerous Train of other providential Paſſages altogether as great, whether we reſpect the Quality of the Actions themſelves, or the Strangeneſs of the Effects. My Buſineſs therefore ſhall be, from ſo notable a Theme, to read Men a Lecture of Humility; and that in a Caſe, in which they ſeldom do (and yet have all the Reason in the World to) ſhew it; to wit, in taking a due Eſtimate of the Proceedings of Almighty GOD, eſpecially

cially in his winding and turning about the great Affairs of States and Nations ; and therein to demonstrate, what weak, purblind Expositors we are of what is above us ; how unfit to arraign and pass Sentence upon that Providence, that over-rules us in all our Concerns ; and in a Word, to turn Interpreters, where we understand not the Original. It is nodoubt, an easy Matter to gaze upon the Surface and Outside of Things. But few, who see the Hand of the Clock or Dial, can give a Reason of its Motion ; nor can the Case of the Watch (though never so finely wrought) be any Rule to judge of the artificial Composure, and exact Order of the Work within.

Now he, who would pass a clear, firm, and thorough Judgment upon any Action, must be able to give an Account of these two Things belonging to it, *viz.*

1. FROM what Cause, or Reason it proceeds.
2. To what Event or Issue it tends.

In both which Respects I shall demonstrate, that the sublimest Wisdom of Man is an incompetent Judge of the Ways of God. And

1. FOR the Reason or Cause of them. Men are so far from judging rightly of the Passages of Providence, that the Causes they assign of them are for the most Part false ; but always imperfect.

AND first, for the false ones ; these (or some of them at least) are such as follow.

#### I. THAT

1. THAT the Prosperous in this Life are the proper Objects of GOD's Love; and the Calamitous of his Hatred: A blessed Doctrine doubtless, and exactly according to that of *Mahomet*, even the very Marrow and Spirit of the Alcoran, and the prime Article, or rather Sum Total of the *Ottoman Divinity*. But such, we see, is the natural Aptness of Men to bring down GOD to their own Measures, and to ascribe only those Methods to Him, which they first transcribe and copy from themselves. For they know well enough, how they treat one another, and that all the Hostility of a Man's Actions pre-supposes and results from a much greater in his Affections; so that the Hand is never lifted up to strike, but as it is commanded by the Heart, that hates. And accordingly, let any notable Calamity befall any one, (and especially if maligned by us) and then how naturally do there start up, in the Minds of such *Mahometan* Christians, such Reasonings, as these: *Can so beneficent a Being as GOD, be imagined to torment in Love? To kill with Kindness? Or, does the Noise of his Blows, and the Sounding of his Bowels speak the same Thing?* No, by no Means; and therefore when any one chances to be cut off by the Stroke of some severe Providence, no sooner has GOD done Execution, but the Malice of Men presently passes Sentence, and, by a preposterous Proceeding, the Man is first executed, and afterwards condemned, and so dies not for being a Criminal, but passes for a Criminal for being put to Death.

MANY remarkable Instances of which have been in the late Times of Confusion; in direct Contradiction to the Spirit of GOD Himself, who positively, in *Eccles. ix. 1.* assures us, That *no Man knows either Love or Hatred, by all that is before him*; nor consequently can conclude himself in Favour,



Favour, or out of Favour with Almighty God, by any Thing befalling him in this Life; indeed, no more than he can read the future Estate of his Soul in the Line of his Face, or the Constitution of his Body in the Colour of his Cloaths. For should the Quality of a Man's Condition here determine the Happiness or Misery of it hereafter, no doubt *Lazarus* would have been in the Flames, and the rich Man in *Abraham's* Bosom. But the next Life will open us a very different Scene from what we see in this; and shew us quite another Face of Things and Persons from that which dazzles and deludes Mens Eyes at present; it being the signal and peculiar Glory of the Day of Judgment, that it be the great Day of Distinction, as well as Retribution. But in the mean Time, does not common Experience undeniably convince us, that God sometime curses Men, even with Prosperity, confounds them in the very Answer of their Prayers; and (as it were) choaks them with their own Petitions? Does He not, as He did formerly to the *Israelites*, at the same Time put Flesh into their craving Mouths, and send Leanness withal into their Souls? And is there any Thing more usually practised in the World, than for Men to feast their mortal Enemies? Persons, whom they equally hate, and are hated by? While on the other Side, as a Father chides, frowns upon and lashes the Child whom he dearly loves, (his Bowels all the Time yearning, while his Hand is striking) so how common is it in the Methods of Divine Love, for God to cast his *Jobs* upon Dunghills to banish into Wildernesses, and so sell his most beloved *Josephs* into Slavery; and, in a Word, to discipline and fit him for Himself, by all that is harsh and terrible to human Nature? and still there is Nothing but Love and Designs of Mercy at the Bottom of all this. *Thy Rod and thy Staff* (says *David*) com-  
fort

fort me, Psal. xxxiii. 4. that is, with his Staff He corrects, but still with both He comforts.

Now though I think it is sufficiently manifest to the Impartial and Judicious, that neither the Suffering of our Prince, or his loyal Subjects, were any Arguments of GOD's Hatred of them; yet, I hope, his Restoration was an Effect of GOD's to those poor harrassed Kingdoms; I say, I hope so: For our great Ingratitude, Sensuality, and raging Impiety ever since our Deliverance, makes me far from being confident, that was in itself incomparably the greatest of earthly Blessings, may not be made the fatal Means to sink us lower, and damn us deeper, than any Sins committed by us under the Rod of the Usurpers could have done. This is certain, that GOD may outwardly deliver us: He may turn our very Table into a Snare. And I know no certain Mark, whereby we may infallibly conclude, that GOD did the glorious Work, which we celebrate this Day, out of Love to us, but only, that we become holier and better by it than before. But if it should prove otherwise, will it not rank us with the Harden'd and Incorrigible, whose Infidelity such Miracles could not melt down? And having upon both Accounts done so much for us to so little Purpose, resolve never to do more. And thus much for the first false Cause, commonly assigned of the Dealings of GOD's Providence, namely, GOD's Love or Hatred of the Persons, upon whom they pass. But,

2. ANOTHER false Cause, from which Men derive the different Proceedings of Providence, is the different Proceedings of Providence, in the different Merit of the Persons so differently treated by it: And from hence still supposing, that the Good only must prosper, and the Bad suffer; they accordingly

ingly from Mens Prosperity conclude their Innocence, as from their Sufferings their Guilt. And from this Topick it was, that *Job's* Friends argued; and that with such Assurance, that one would have thought, they took all they said for Demonstration; but how falsely and rashly they did so, appears from the Verdict passed by GOD Himself upon the whole Matter, both rejecting their Persons, and condemning their Reasonings, by a severe Remark upon the Presumption of the one, and the Inconsequence of the other. For where the Rule is crooked, how can the Line drawn by it be strait? It is most true, that there is no Man, (our blessed Saviour only excepted) who either does, or ever did suffer, but was more or less a Sinner, before he was a Sufferer: And consequently, that there is Ground enough in every Man, to make GOD's Infliction of the greatest Evil upon him just; and yet I affirm that a Man's Sin is not always the Reason of his Sufferings, though Sinfulness be still the Qualification of his Person: But the Reason of those must be fetched from some other Cause. For the better understanding of which, we must observe, that GOD may, and sometimes actually does, deal with Men under a double Capacity or Relation. *viz.* 1. As an absolute Lord; and, 2. As a Judge or a Governor. The Rule, which He proceeds by as an absolute Lord, is his sovereign Will and Pleasure; and the Rule which He acts by as Judge, is his Justice and his Law. Now, though under the former Notion GOD does not properly exercise or exert his Justice, yet he cannot therefore be said to do any Thing unjustly; it being one Thing for GOD barely not to exercise an Attribute in such or such a particular Action, and another to oppose, or do any Thing contrary to the said Attribute. The former of which is usual, and fairly agree-



agreeable with the Œconomy of his Attributes, but the latter is impossible.

YET in the various Dispensations befalling the Sons of Men, we find, how prone the World has been all along, to state the different Usages of Mens Persons upon the Difference of their Deserts. As when *Pilate* mingled the *Galileans* Blood with their Sacrifices, there were enough ready to conclude those poor *Galileans* Sinners above all other *Galileans*, for their suffering such Things; but our Saviour quickly reverses the Sentence, and assures them, that the Consequence was by no Means good, *Luke* xiii. 1, 2. And on the other Hand, the *Israelites*, from the many miraculous Works done for them, and Blessings heaped upon them by the Divine Bounty, concluded themselves holier and more righteous than all the Nations about them; but we find both *Moses* in *Deut.* ix. and the Psalmist in *Psal.* lxxviii. roundly telling them, that there was no such Thing, but that they were a *rebellious, ungrateful, stiff-necked People* from the very first: And for ought appears from History to the contrary, have continued so ever since. And to proceed farther, did not the righteous Providence of God bring down most of the Potentates of the Eastern World under the Feet of that Monster of Tyranny and Idolatry, *Nebuchadnezzar*; and that while he was actually reigning in his Sins, with as high an Hand, as he did or could do over any of those poor Kingdoms, who had been conquered or enslaved by him? In like Manner, did not the same Providence make most of the Crowns and Scepters of the Earth bend to the *Roman Yoke*? The Greatness of which Empire was certainly founded upon as much Injustice, Rapine, and Violence, as could well be practised by Men; though still couched and carried on under the highest Pretence of Justice and Honour,

(set off with the greatest Shew of Gravity besides) even while the said Pretences in the Sight of the whole World were impudently outfaced by the quite contrary Practices; as appears in particular from that scandalous Case of the *Mamertines*, and the Assistance they gave those Thieves and Murderers, against all the Laws of Nations and Humanity itself, only to serve a present Interest against the *Carthaginians*. And lastly, what a Torrent of Success attended the *Turks*, 'till they had over-run most of the Earth, and the whole *Greek Church and Empire*? And yet the notorious governing Qualities, which these Barbarians acted, and grew up by, both in War and Peace, were the Height of Cruelty and Treachery; Qualities of all other the most abhorred by GOD and Man, and such as we may be sure could never induce GOD to abandon so great a Part of Christendom (which yet in his Judgment He has actually done) to so base a People, and so false a Religion. And now, notwithstanding such flagrant Examples of thriving Impiety, carrying all before it, we see how apt the World is still to make Providence steer by Man's Merit. And as we have Instances of this in Nations, so we want not the like in particular Persons.

BUT should Providence at any Time strip a Man of his Estate, his Honour, or high Place, must this presently stamp him a Castaway; or rather teach us, that GOD who perfectly knew the Temper and Circumstances of the Man, knew also, that a mean and a low Condition would place him nearer to Heaven (as much a Paradox as it may seem) than the highest and most magnificent. Another Man perhaps is snatch'd away by a sudden, or untimely, a disastrous, or ignominious Death; but must I therefore pass Sentence upon him out of *Daniel*, or the *Revelations*, or charge him with some secret Guilt,

Guilt, as the Cause of it; as if the Fever or an Apoplexy were not sufficient, without the concurring Plague and Poison of a malicious Tongue, to send a Man packing out of this World; or, as if any Death could be so violent, or Distemper so mortal and malign, but that it may, and does carry some into a better World, as well as others into a worse? But be the Course of Providence never so unaccountable, and contrary to my Notions, ought I to descant upon any Act of it, while I am wholly ignorant of the Purpose which directed it? Or shall I confess the Ways of GOD to be *unsearchable, and past finding out*, and at the same Time attempt to give a Reason of them, and so to the Arrogance join the Contradictions? Such Methods certainly are equally senseless and irreligious.

HISTORIES inform us of many worthy and brave Persons brought to unworthy Ends; any one of which were enough to rebuke the Proneness of the World to judge of the Causes of GOD's Dealing with Men from any Qualifications in the Persons so dealt with.

AND thus as we have given Proof more than enough of Mens utter Unfitness to sound the Depths of GOD's providential Dealings with them upon this Account, *that they usually ascribe them to false Causes*: So in the

*Third PLACE*, The same will appear yet farther from this; *that they always resolve them into imperfect Causes*. Who would assign an adequate Reason of any Thing, which GOD does, must see as far into it, as GOD sees. And there is scarce any extraordinary Passage of Providence, which does not point at least a thousand Years forward, and stretch itself more than a thousand Miles about; so



that a Man must be able to take into his Mind all that long Train and wide Compass of Purposes, to which it may subserve, and all those Influences which it may cast upon Things vastly remote in Place, and distant many Ages in Time; which it is impossible for any created Intellect to have a clear Prospect into, or Comprehension of. There is no Action of GOD, but there is a Combination of impulsive Causes concerned in it; one or two of which possibly the Wit of Man may sometimes light upon, but the Shortness or Weakness of his discerning Powers keeps him inevitably a Stranger to far the greater Part of them. GOD, by one and the same numerical Lot of Providence, may intend to punish one Nation, and to advance another; to plant the Gospel in a third, and to let in Trade into a fourth; likewise to make Way for the Happiness of one Man's Posterity, and for the Extinction and Razing out of another's; to reward the Virtues of a sober and industrious People, and to revenge the \* Crimes of a slothful and a vicious, a perjured and rebellious, with innumerable other Designs, which GOD may actually propose to Himself in every single Passage of his Transactions with Men; and which we are no more fit or able to search into, or arbitrate upon, than we are to govern the World.

AND thus much for the first general Argument, proving the Insufficiency of any human Wisdom to interpret the Actions of Providence, taken from its Inability, truly and thoroughly to pierce into the Reasons of them; which, as it must always make one considerable Ingredient in passing a right Judg-

---

\* No Nation certainly, at this Time, farther in Debt to God's Justice, than the *English*.

ment upon any Action, so I shew, that there was another also required, namely, *a certain Prospect into the utmost Issue or Event of the same.* Upon which Account also Man's Unfitness to judge of the Proceedings of Providence shall be now made out to us, by considering those false Rules and Grounds, by which Men generally fore-judge of the Issue and Event of Actions: As,

**I. MEN** usually prognosticate the Event of any Thing or Action, according to the *Measure of the Prudence, Wisdom and Policy of second Agents, immediately engaged in it.* And it must be confessed, that it is the best and likeliest Rule that they have to judge by, were it not controlled by two better and likelier, and from which there can lie no Appeal, viz. *Scripture and Experience.* The former of which brings in GOD *laughing at the Wisdom of the Wise*; taking and circumventing the *Crafty in their own Wiles.* Job v. 12, 13. baffling the subtle and shrewd Advices of *Balaam and Abitophel*, and so stifling both Counsel and Counsellor in a *Noose* of his own making. And for the latter, History so abounds with Instances of the most refined Counsels, and artificially spun Contrivances, dashed in Pieces by some sudden and unforeseen Accidents, that to ascertain the Event of the most promising Undertaking, if we trust but our own Eyes, we shall have little Cause to trust to another's Wisdom.

**2. MEN** usually prognosticate the Success of any Project or Design, from *Success formerly gained under the same, or less probable Circumstances.* And the Argument seems to proceed *à majore ad minus*, that if a Man could conquer and break through a greater Difficulty, much more may he presume that he shall be able to master and go through a less. And perhaps the Ratiocination, according to

to the bare natural Consequences of Things, is true and good. Nevertheless it is manifest, that Men frequently miscarry in the Application of it; and several Reasons may be given for their doing so: As, 1. It is hard, and perhaps scarce possible (whatsoever less observing Minds may imagine to the contrary) to repeat and exemplify any Action, under perfectly the same Circumstances. 2. That in most Actions there are still some Circumstances not observed or taken Notice of, which may have a surer and more immediate Influence upon the Event of those Actions, than those Circumstances, which, coming more into View, are more depended upon. But, 3. And chiefly because the Success of every Action depends more upon the secret Hand of God, than upon any Causes or Instruments visibly engaged in it. Take an Instance or two of this.

It was easy and natural enough to conclude, that *Hannibal* having so worsted the *Roman* Armies, while they were in their fresh Strength and full Number, should have been much abler to crush the same Enemy under all those Disadvantages which such great and frequent Defeats must needs have brought upon them. And yet we find *Fabius* and *Marcellus*, after some Time, wonderfully turning the Stream of his Conquests, and *Scipio*, at length, totally subduing him. In like Manner, if a Nation under an usurped Government, divided in itself, and in continual Danger of Comotions at Home, as well as of Enemies from Abroad, was yet an Over-match to its Neighbour Nation in a War against it; it seems rational and probable enough to infer from thence, that the same Nation, settled under an unquestionably legal Government, and free from any Disturbances within itself, should be much more likely (especially under the same Conduct) to cope with, and subdue



subdue the same Enemy. And yet we find, that the Premisses taken up from our Naval Successes in the Years 1652 and 1653, produced but a poor Conclusion in our Contest with the same Adversary in the Years 1666 and 1667; when we were so shamefully insulted upon our Coasts, and our noblest Ships fired in our Harbours. And the Cause of this seems not so much derivable from any Failure either of the *English* Courage or Conduct at Sea, as from the secret Judgments of God, (much the *greater Deep* of the two :) So that it is clear, this Rule also of gathering the future Success of Actions, is weak and fallacious: And that in some Sorts of Events, after Things have been contrived and put together with the utmost Exactness, a Link or two of the Chain happening to break, the Coherence of the whole is hereby dissolved; and then, how fairly soever the *Antecedent* may have promised us, we shall yet in the Close of all find ourselves lurch'd of the *Consequent*.

3. MEN generally measure the Issue and Success of any Enterprize, according to the Preparations made for it, and the Power employed in it; it being a Rule of Judging, which the World cannot be beaten off from; that *Ten Thousand must needs chase a Thousand, and a Thousand put an Hundred to Flight*. Victory, on much the stronger Side, seems still to be foreseen and foretold as certainly, as a necessary Effect in the Bowels of its Cause. And yet we shall find, that it is not always the bigger Weight, but sometimes the artificial Hand holding and managing the Ballance, which turns the Scale. And in like Manner, when we have rais'd Armies, and mann'd our Fleets, are we not still in the Hand of Providence? In that Hand, which sometimes sets the Crown of Victory upon the Weak and the Few, and disappoints the Hopes, and breaks

breaks the Force of the Confident and Numerous? Could any take up surer and better grounded Presages of Victory, from a Survey of his own stupendous Power, than *Xerxes* might, when he came to *fetter the Hellespont*, and to swallow up the (comparatively) despicable Strength of the *Athenians*? Or could any Thing look more invincible, than the *Spanish Armada* sent against the *English* Navy? But for all this, we find that there is no commanding the Sea, without being able to command the Winds too; and he who cannot do this, let him not pretend to the other.

WHAT a poor Thing is Preparation to be trusted to, in Opposition to Accident? And what a pitiful Defence is *Multitude* on the one Side, where *Omnipotence* takes the other? If we read and believe Scripture, we shall find *Gideon* with his three hundred Men, armed with Lamps and Pitchers, routing and destroying the vast and innumerable Host of the *Midianites*: And can any rational Man be confident of the greatest Forces which human Power can raise, if he believes that the same God who did that, is still in Being, and still as able to do the same Things as ever? Nay, should we take an exact Survey of all Passages in History to this Purpose; such a Pleasure does Providence seem to take in defeating the Counsels of confident and presuming Men, that perhaps in the greatest Battles which were ever fought, we shall find as many Victories obtained by a less Number over a greater, as by a greater over a less: And what then must become of the commonly received Rules?

BUT, to keep nearer Home, and to the Day too, if human Force and Preparation could have determined the Event of Things, and Providence had proceeded by the same Measures which Men judge,

judge, the Business of this Day, I am sure, had been desperate. For were not the Usurpers, just before the King's Restoration, as strong as ever? Did they not sit lording it in the Head of victorious Fleets and Armies, with their Feet upon the Neck of three conquered Kingdoms; and striking such Awe and Terror into all about them, that the boldest of their Adversaries durst not so much as stir or open their Mouths either against their Persons or Proceedings? And now, in this State of Things, who would have imagined, that any one could have entered into *the strong Man's House, and have bound him, but one who had been much stronger?* Or that any Thing could have recovered the lost Sceptre, but a triumphant Sword? Or that the Crown being once *fought off* from the Royal Owner's Head, could have ever returned to it, but by being *fought on again?* These, and no other Methods of restoring the King, did either his Friends or his Enemies think of; but so infinitely unlikely and unfeasible were they, that his Enemies feared them as little, as his Friends had Grounds to hope for them.

WHEN, behold! on a Sudden, and in the Height of all their Pride, Policy, and Power, Providence gives them a Turn, and they see the whole Web, which with so much Pains, Cost and Cunning, they had been so long a weaving, unravelled before their Eyes in a Moment, and themselves clear off the Stage, without having settled any one of those Innovations either in Church or State, which they had been *plundering and fighting for near twenty Years together*; but instead thereof, the ancient Government was restored, and happily set upon its former Bottom; and all this (to phrase it in the Words of the late Historian, Dr. *Peter Heylin*) so easily, and with so little Noise, that the  
Wrestling



Wresting of that usurped Power out of their Hands cost not so much as a broken Head or a bloody Nose; for the Getting of which they had wasted so many Millions of Treasure, and more than *one hundred thousand Lives*, not to mention *the Loss of Souls*; by such unlikely and unforeseeable Ways does Providence sometimes bring about its great Designs in Opposition to the shrewdest Conjectures and Contrivances of Men.

AND thus much for the other general Argument, proving the Inability of any human Wisdom, to comprehend the Designs of Providence, taken from those false Rates and Grounds, by which Men generally fore-judge of the Issue or Event of Actions.

AND now, for the Use and Improvement of what has been discoursed, we may, from the foregoing Particulars, infer these three Things:

I. THE extreme Folly and Vanity of making the future Event, or presumed Success of any Enterprize, the Rule of our present Actings about the same. A Rule should be a Thing both certain in itself, and certainly known to be so. But there is no future Contingent which we promise ourselves, though under the greatest Probability of Event imaginable, but is still a Thing in itself uncertain; and consequently, being capable of failing us in the Issue, can be no certain Rule to guide us for the present. And moreover, as a Rule in any human Action whatsoever ought to be (as we have here shewn) both certain, and certainly known to be such, upon the Stock of bare Prudence and Reason; so ought it likewise to be lawful, or morally good upon the Accounts of Conscience and Religion; and therefore Nothing contrary to the same ought to be admitted as a Rule for Men to act by, whether

whether in a private or a publick Capacity. In a Word, Conscience duly steering by Principles of Religion, is the sole assured Director of all human Actions or Designs. So that when any political Consideration would draw Men off from a present confessed Duty, upon Supposal of some future Advantage (to ensue thereby for the Service of some great Interest civil or religious) still that Advantage is but supposed, and so not always sure to follow the illegal *Actions*; but the *Guilt* of it always does.

2. WE gather also from the foregoing Discourse, *the absolute Necessity of an entire, total, unreserved Dependence upon Providence, in the most hopeful and promising Condition of our Affairs.* The natural Cause or Ground of all Dependence, is Mens Consciousness to themselves of their own Ignorance or Weakness, compared with the Sufficiency of others, whereby they expect their Relief from others, which they find they cannot have from themselves.

THIS I conceive is the true Account of this Matter. And we have already sufficiently demonstrated Man's utter Inability, either to understand the *Reasons*, or to controll the *Issues* of Providence; so that in all the Passages of it, an *implicit Faith* in GOD's Wisdom is Man's greatest *Knowledge*, and a Dependence upon his Power his surest *Strength*. For when all the Faculties of Man's Body and Mind have done their utmost, still the Success of all is at the Mercy of Providence; the Ways of which are intricate and various; the Grounds upon which it proceeds, *unintelligible*; and the Ends it drives at, *unsearchable*. But, in a Word, to make our Reliance upon Providence both pious and rational, we should in every great

VOL. XLIII. T Enterprize

Enterprize we take in Hand, prepare all Things with that Care, Diligence, and Activity, as if there were no such Thing as Providence for us to depend upon: And again, when we have done all this, we should depend upon it, as if we had made no such Preparations at all. And this is a Rule of Practice, which will never fail or shame any, who shall venture all they *have* or *are* upon it: For as a Man, by exerting his utmost Force in any Action or Business, has all that human Strength can do for him therein; so by quitting his Confidence in the same, and placing it only in GOD, he is sure also of all that Omnipotence can do in his Behalf. It is enough, that GOD has put a Man's Actions into his own Power; but the Success of them, I am sure, He has not. And therefore all Trust in Man, about Things not within the Power of Man, (according to the Account of Heaven) is virtually a Distrust of GOD: For let but our Trust in Him be measured out by our *whole Heart, Soul, and Strength*, (the only Measure of it which the Scripture knows) and we shall find but a poor Overplus to bestow upon any Thing besides. But,

3. AND *lastly*, as we have from the premised Particulars evinced the Necessity of a Dependence upon Providence, so from the same we may learn the Impossibility of a rational Dependence upon it, with any Comfort, but in the Way of lawful, honest and religious Courses. This is certain, that in all our Undertakings GOD will be either our Friend or our Enemy: For Providence never stands neuter; and if so, is it not a sad Thing for a Man to make a mighty Potentate his Enemy, and then to put himself under his Protection? And yet this is directly the Case of every presuming Sinner, and these the Terms upon which he stands with Almighty GOD. But can that Man with any Confidence



fidence rest himself upon GOD's Power, whose Conscience shall in the mean Time proclaim him a Traytor to his Laws? Or can any People, Nation or Government whatsoever, in the doubtful Engagements of War, cast itself upon GOD's *Mercy*, while by its crying Sins of Profaneness, Atheism, and Irreligion, it knows itself so deeply in Arrears to his *Justice*? No Man persisting in any known wicked Course can rationally hope, that GOD should succeed or prosper him in any Thing that he goes about; and if Success should chance to accompany him in it, it is a Thousand to One but it is intended only as a Curse, as the very greatest of Curses, and the readiest Way, by hardening him in his Sin, to ascertain his Destruction. He who will venture his Life in a *Duel*, should not *chuse to have his mortal Enemy for his Second*.

On the contrary, the same *Innocence* which makes all quiet *within* a Man, makes all peaceable and serene *above* him. And that Person cannot but have a certain Boldness, and a Kind of Claim to the Favours of Providence, whose Heart is continually telling him, *that he does as he should do*; and his Conscience having been all along his *Director*, cannot, in the Issue, prove his *Accuser*. But all Things, whether he looks forwards or backwards, upon what is past or what is to come, shall concur in assuring him, that his great Judge has no other Sentence to pass upon him, but to set a Crown of Glory upon his Head, and receive him with a *Well done!* Enter thou into the *Joy of thy LORD*. And if, being thus inspired with such supporting Expectations, he should yet chance utterly to sink, as to all his Concerns and Interests here below, yet having thus broke through them all to discharge his Duty, the very Sense of his having done so shall strengthen his Heart, and bear up  
 T 2 his

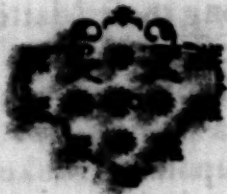
his Spirits, though the whole World were in Arms against him, or in a Flame about him; so that he shall be able, from his own Experience, to seal the Truth of that seeming Paradox of the Apostle, in *Rom. viii. 36, 37.* that Persons, thus assisted from above, even in *Tribulations, Distress, Persecution, Famine, Nakedness,* (the known Badges of Primitive Christianity) nay, in *their being killed all the Day long, and accounted as Sheep for the Slaughter,* shall yet, under those very Massacres, *become more than Conquerors,* through that GOD who makes those who fight under his Banners, triumph more gloriously in *losing their Blood* for Him, than their mightiest Enemies do or can in their *shedding of it.* For if a Man falls a *Sacrifice* to GOD, his *Conscience,* or his *Country,* it is not material by what Hand he falls: GOD accepts the *Martyr,* whosoever is the *Executioner.* And so long as there is another World to *reward* and *punish,* no Man's Doom can be certainly pronounced from any Thing *that befalls him in this.*

AND now at length, to come to a Close, we have shewn the Darkness and Intricacy of the Ways of Providence; and we have shewn also, what *incompetent Judges,* and yet what *confident Interpreters* Men are generally of them: From all which what can so naturally be inferred, as the several Reprimands of the *Blindness* and *Boldness* (Qualities seldom found asunder) of the saucy Descants of the World concerning these Matters? For what do they else, but, in Effect, arraign even Providence itself? Summon Omniscience before the Bar of Ignorance? And, in a Word, put a pitiful Mortal to sit in Judgment upon his Maker? The Text, I am sure, positively declares, that the Works of GOD are *past finding out;* and if so, is it not the Height of Absurdity, as well as Arrogance, to assign

sign, either from *Divinity* or *Philosophy*, any other Reason of the Works themselves, but the sole Will of the Agent? Or to pretend to give an Account of that, which we ourselves own to be unaccountable? Common Sense certainly must needs see and explode the Grossness of the *Contradiction*, and convince us, that in Things so transcendently above our highest Speculations, the only rational and safe Rule for us to proceed by, will be to make them rather Matter of *Admiration* than of *Argument*, still remembering, that next to a direct Violation of God's *revealed Will*, is a bold Intrusion into his *secret*.

*Now to the infinitely wise Governor of all Things, adorable in his Counsels, and stupendous in his Works, but essentially just and holy in both, be rendered and ascribed (as is most due) all Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.*

**The End of Dr. South's WORKS.**



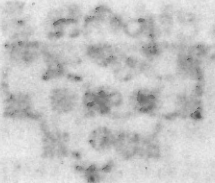


sign, either from Divinity or Philosophy, any  
 other Reason of the Works themselves, but the  
 will of the Agent. Or to pretend to give  
 account of that which was owing to his  
 Government? Common Sense certainly must  
 needs see and explode the Grounds of the Centu-  
 raries, and convince us, that in things to man-  
 age, we have our right regulations, the only  
 rational and safe Rule for us to proceed by, will  
 be to make them rather Matter of Administration than  
 of Government, still remembering, that next to a  
 Violation of Government, is a bold  
 transgression into the

6 Y 64

Next to the infinitely wise Governor of all things,  
 there is our Country, and Government in the  
 world, but infinitely just and holy in itself, be-  
 lieved and gloried (as it may be) all Princes,  
 Kings, Bishops, and Dominions, both new and  
 for evermore. Amen.

Mr. F. L. V. E. L.  
 The End of Dr. South's Works.



A N  
E X T R A C T  
F R O M T H E  
W O R K S  
O F  
Mr. *F L A V E L*.



Navigation & Astronomical Instruments

EXTRACT

NEW COMPASS

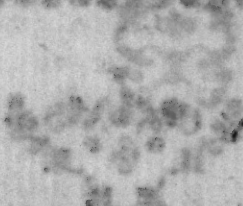
FROM THE



Containing of Thirty Two Points

MR. FLAWE

Printed by J. W. Smith, at the Admiralty, Whitehall.



Printed by J. W. Smith, at the Admiralty, Whitehall.

THE

NAVY



Navigation Spiritualiz'd:

OR, A

NEW COMPASS

FOR

SEAMEN,

Consisting of Thirty Two Points.

---



THE

Navigation Spiritualis, d:

NEW COMPASS



Consisting of Thirty Two Points



THE



T H E

# Epistle Dedicatory.



T O A L L

Masters, Mariners, *and* Seamen.

**I** FIND it story'd of Anacharſis, that when one asked him, Whether the Living or the Dead, were more? He returned this Answer, You muſt firſt tell me in which Number I muſt place Seamen: Intimating thereby, that Seamen are, as it were, a third Sort of Perſons, to be numbered neither with the Living nor the Dead, their Lives hanging continually in Suspence. And it was anciently accounted the moſt deſperate Employment, and they little better than loſt Men that uſed the Seas. And altho' Cuſtom, and the great Improvement of the Art of Navigation, have made it



*it less formidable now, yet are you no further from Death than you are from the Waters; which is but a Remove of two or three Inches. Now you that border so nigh upon the Confines of Death and Eternity every Moment, may well be supposed to be Men of singular Piety and Seriousness. But alas! for the Generality, What Sort of Men are more ungodly, and stupidly insensible of eternal Concernments? Living for the most Part as if they had made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell were at Agreement.*

*It was an ancient Saying, He that knows not how to pray, let him go to Sea. But we may say now (alas, that we may say so in Times of greater Light) He that would learn to drink and swear, let him go to Sea. As for Prayer, it is a rare Thing among Seamen; they count that a needless Business: They see the Profane and Vile delivered as well as others; and therefore, What Profit is there if they pray unto him? Mal. iii. 14. As I remember, I have read of a profane Soldier, who was heard swearing in a Place of great Danger; and when one that stood by him warned him, saying, Fellow Soldier, do not swear, the Bullets fly; he answered, They that swear come off as well as they that pray. Soon after a Shot hit him and down he fell. Plato diligently admonished all Men to avoid the Seas: For (saith he) it is the School-master of all Vice and Dishonesty.*

*It is a very sad Consideration to me, that you who float upon the great Deep, in whose Bottom so many thousand poor Creatures lie, whose Sins have sunk them down, not only into the Bottom of the Sea, but of Hell also: That you (I say) who daily float and hover over them, and have the roaring Waves that swallowed them up, gaping for you as the next Prey, should be no more affected with these Things. O what a terrible Voice doth GOD utter in the Storms! It breaks the Cedars, shakes the Wilderness, Ps. xxix. 5. And can it not shake your Hearts? This Voice of the LORD is full of Majesty, but his Voice in the Word is more powerful, Heb. iv. 12. to convince and rip up the Heart. This Word is exalted above all his Name, and if it cannot awaken you, it is no Wonder you remain secure and dead, when the LORD utters his Voice in the most dreadful Storms and Tempests. But if neither the Voice of GOD uttered in his dreadful Works, or in his glorious Gospel, can effectually awaken, there is a fearful Storm coming, which will so awaken your Souls, as that they shall never sleep any more, Ps. xi. 6. Upon the Wicked He shall rain Snares, Fire and Brimstone, and an horrible Tempest: This is the Portion of their Cup. You that have been at Sea in the most violent Storms, never felt such a Storm as this, and the LORD grant you never may; no Calm shall follow this Storm.*

There are some amongst you, that, I am persuaded, do truly fear that God in whose Hand their Life and Breath is; Men that fear an Oath, and are an Honour to their Profession; who drive a Trade for Heaven, and are diligent to secure that Happiness of their immortal Souls in the Insurance-Office above: But for the Generality, alas! they mind none of these Things. How many of you are cast to and fro, from one Country to another? but never think of that Heavenly Country above, nor how you may get the Merchandize, which is better than the Gold of Ophir. How oft do you tremble to see the foaming Waves dance about you, and wash over you? yet consider not how terrible it will be to have the Waves and Billows of GOD's Wrath go over your Souls, and that for ever. How glad are you, after you have been long tossed upon the Ocean, to descry Land? And how eagerly do you look out for it? who yet never had your Hearts warmed with the Consideration of that Joy which shall be among the Saints, when they arrive at the Heavenly Strand, and set Foot upon the Shore of Glory.

O Sirs! I beg of you, if you have any Regard to those precious immortal Souls of yours, which are also embarked for Eternity, whither all Winds blow them, and will quickly be at their Port of Heaven or Hell, that you will seriously mind these Things, and learn to steer your Course to Heaven, and improve all Winds  
(I mean



(I mean Opportunities and Means) to waſt you  
thither.

Here you may venture Life and Liberty, run through many Difficulties and Dangers, and all to compaſs a perishing Treafure; yet how often do you return diſappointed in your Deſigns? Or if not, yet it is but a fading ſhort-lived Inheritance, which like the flowing Tide, for a little while covers the Shore, and then returns and leaves it naked again: And are not everlaſting Treafures worth venturing for? Good Souls, be wiſe for Eternity: I here preſent you with the Fruit of a few ſpare Hours, redeemed for your Sakes, from my other Studies. I have endeavoured to cloath ſpiritual Matters in your own Phraſes, that they might be the more intelligible to you.

If God ſhall bleſs theſe Meditations to the Conversion of any among you, you will be the Gainers, and my Heart ſhall rejoice, even mine. How comfortably ſhould we ſhake Hands with you, when you go abroad, were we perſuaded your Souls were intereſted in Chriſt? What Life would it put in our Prayers for you, when you are abroad, to conſider that Jeſus Chriſt is interceeding for you in Heaven, whiſt we are your Remembrancers here on Earth? How quiet would our Hearts be, when you are abroad in Storms, did we know you had an eſpecial Interſt in Him whom Winds and Seas obey? To conclude, What Joy would it be to your godly Relations;

*tations, to see you return new Creatures?  
Doubtless, more than if you came Home laden  
with the Riches of both the Indies.*

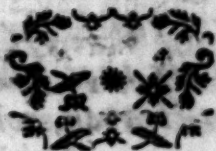
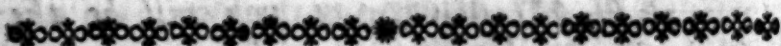
*Come, Sirs! set the Heavenly Jerusalem up-  
on the Point of your New Compass; make  
all the Sail you can for it; and the LORD  
give you a prosperous Gale, and a safe Arrival  
in the Land of Rest!*

So prays,

Your affectionate Friend to serve you,

JOHN FLAVEL.

6 JY 64





*To every SEAMAN Sailing Heaven-ward.*

*Ingenious Seaman,*

**T**HE Art of Navigation, by which Islands especially are enriched, and preserved in Safety from Invasions; and the wonderful Works of God in the great Deep, and Foreign Nations are delightfully beheld, is an Art of exquisite Ingenuity: But the *Art of Spiritual Navigation* is the Art of Arts. It is a gallant Thing to be able to carry a Ship richly laden round the World; but it is much more gallant to carry a Soul (that rich Loading, a Pearl of more Worth than all the Merchandize of the World) in a Body (that is as liable to Leaks and Bruises as any Ship is) through the Sea of this World (which is as unstable as Water) safe to Heaven (the best Haven) so as to avoid splitting upon any Soul-Sinking Rocks, or striking upon any Soul-drowning Sands. The Art of natural Navigation is a very great Mystery; but the Art of spiritual Navigation is by much a greater. Human Wisdom may teach us to carry a Ship to the *Indies*; but the Wisdom only that is from Above can teach us to steer our Course aright to the *Haven of Happiness*. This Art is purely of *Divine Revelation*. The Truth is, *Divinity*, (the Doctrine of living to God) is nothing



nothing else, but the *Art of Soul Navigation*, revealed from Heaven. A mere Man can carry a Ship to any desired Port in the World, but no mere Man can carry a Soul to Heaven. He must be a Saint, he must be a Divine (so all Saints are) that can pilot a Soul to the *fair Haven in Immanuel's Land*. The Art of natural Navigation is wonderfully improved since the Coming of *Christ*, before which Time the Use of the Loadstone was never known; and before the Virtue of that was revealed to the Mariner, it is unspeakable with what uncertain Wanderings Seamen floated here and there. And, sure I am, the Art of spiritual Navigation is wonderfully improved since the Coming of *Christ*: This Art of Arts is now perfectly revealed in the Scriptures; but the Rules thereof are dispersed up and down therein. The Collecting and Methodizing of the same, cannot but be a Work very useful to Souls: Though when all is done, there is an absolute Necessity of the Teachings of the Spirit, to make Souls Artists in sailing *Heaven-ward*.

1. IN order to this, O consider, what rich Merchandize the Soul is. *Christ* assures us, one Soul is more Worth than all the World. The **LORD Jesus** doth as it were put the whole World in one Scale, and one Soul in the other, and the World is found too light, *Matt. xvi. 26*. Shouldst thou by Skill in natural Navigation carry safe all the Treasures of the *Indies* into thine own Port, yea, gain the whole World, and for Want of Skill in spiritual Navigation lose thy Soul, thou wouldst be the greatest Loser: So far wilt thou be from profiting by any of thy Sea Voyages.

2. CONSIDER, what a leaky Vessel thy Body is, in which this unspeakable rich Treasure, thy Soul,

is embarked ! O the many Diseases thy Body is subject to ! It is above Two Thousand Years ago, that there have been reckoned up Three Hundred Names of Diseases ; and there be many under one Name, and many nameless, which pose the Physicians, not only how to cure them, but how to call them. And for the Mind, the Distempers of it are no less deadly, than the Diseases of the Body. But besides these internal Causes, there are many external Causes of Leaks in this Vessel, and very small Matters may be of great Moment to the sinking of it. The least Gnat in the Air may choak one, as it did *Adrian*, the Pope of *Rome* ; a little Hair in Milk may strangle one, as it did a Counsellor in *Rome* ; a little Stone of a Raisin may stop one's Breath, as it did the Poet *Anacreon*. Thus you see what a leaky Vessel you sail in. Now the more leaky any Ship is, the more Need there is of Skill to steer wisely.

3. CONSIDER, what a dangerous Sea the World is, in which the Soul is to sail in the leaky Ship of thy Body. As there are not more Changes in the Sea, than are in the World, the World being only constant in Inconstancy ; so there are not more Dangers in the Sea for Ships, than there are in the World for Souls. In this World Souls meet with Rocks and Sands, and Pirates. Worldly Temptations, worldly Lusts, and worldly Company *drown many in Perdition*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 9. The very Things of this World endanger our Souls. By worldly Objects we soon grow worldly. It is hard to touch Pitch, and not be defiled. The Lusts of this World stain all our Glory, and the Men of this World pollute all they converse with. A Man that keeps Company with the Men of this World, is like  
him

him that walketh in the Sun, tanned insensibly. Now, the more dangerous the Sea is, the more requisite it is the Sailor be an Artist.

4. CONSIDER, what if through Want of Skill in the Art of spiritual Navigation, thou shouldst not steer thy Course aright. 1. Thou wilt never arrive at the Haven of Happiness. 2. Thou shalt be drowned in the Ocean of GOD's Wrath. As sure as the Word of GOD is true; as sure as the Heavens are over thy Head, and the Earth under thy Feet; as sure as thou yet livest and breathest in this Air; so sure it is, thou shalt sink into the bottomless Pit. Possibly now thou makest a light Matter of these Things, because thou dost not know what it is to miss of Heaven, and what it is for ever to lie under the Wrath of GOD: But hereafter thou wilt know fully, what it is to have thy Soul lost eternally, so lost, as that GOD's Mercies, and all the Good there is in *Christ*, shall never save it. Hereafter thou wilt be perfectly sensible of the Good that thou mightest have had, and of the Evil that shall be upon thee; then thou wilt have other Thoughts of these Things than now thou hast: Then the Thoughts of thy Mind shall be busied about thy lost Condition, both as to the Pain of Loss, and the Pain of Sense; so that thou shalt not be able to take any Ease one Moment: Then thou shalt have true and deep Apprehensions of the Greatness of that Good that thou shalt miss of, and of that Evil which thou shalt procure thy self; and then thou shalt not be able to chuse, but to apply all thy Loss, all thy Misery to thy self, which will force thee to roar out, O my Loss! O my Misery! O my inconceivable unrecoverable Loss and Misery! O that, to prevent that Loss and Misery, these Things may



may now be laid to Heart ! O that a blind Understanding, a stupid Judgment, a bribed Conscience, a hard Heart, a bad Memory, may no longer make Heaven and Hell seem but Trifles to thee ! Thou wilt then easily be persuaded to make it thy main Business here, to become an Artift in spiritual Navigation. But to shut up this, I shall briefly acquaint Seamen, why they should, of all others, be Men of singular Piety, and therefore more than ordinarily study the Art of spiritual Navigation. O that Seamen would therefore consider,

1. How nigh they border upon Death and Eternity every Moment. There is but a Step, but an Inch or two between them and their Graves continually. The next Gust may over-set them ; the next Wave may swallow them up. In one Place lie lurking dangerous Rocks, in another perilous Sands, and every where stormy Winds, ready to destroy them. Well may the Seamen cry out, I have not had a Morrow in my Hands these many Years. Should not they then be extraordinary serious and heavenly continually ?

2. CONSIDER (Seamen) what extraordinary Help you have by the Book of the Creatures ; the whole Creation is GOD's Voice, it is GOD's excellent Hand-writing, to teach us much of GOD, and what Reasons we have to bewail our Rebellion against GOD, and to make Conscience of obeying GOD continually. The Heavens, the Earth, the Waters, are the three great Leaves of this Book of GOD, and all the Creatures are so many Lines in those Leaves. All that learn not to fear and serve GOD by the Help of this Book, will be left inexcusable, *Rom. i. 20.* How  
inexcusable

inexcusable then will ignorant and ungodly Seamen be? Seamen should, in this Respect, be the best Scholars in the LORD's School, seeing they do, more than others, see the Works of the LORD, and his Wonders in the Deep.

3. CONSIDER how often you are nearer Heaven than any People in the World. *They mount up to Heaven*, Psal. cvii. 26. It has been said of an ungodly Minister, that contradicted his Preaching in his Life and Conversation, That it was a Pity he should ever come out of his Pulpit, because he was there as near Heaven as ever he would be. Shall it be said of you, upon the same Account, That it is Pity you should come down from the high-towering Waves? Should not Seamen, that in stormy Weather have their Feet (as it were) upon the Battlements of Heaven, look down upon all earthly Happiness but as base, waterish, and worthless? The great Cities of *Campania* seem but small Cottages to them that stand on the *Alps*. Should not Seamen that so often mount up to Heaven, make it their main Business to get into Heaven? What, (Seamen) shall you only go to Heaven against your Wills? When Seamen mount up to Heaven in a Storm, the *Psalmist* tells us, That *their Souls are melted because of Trouble*. O that you were continually as unwilling to go to Hell, as you are in a Storm to go to Heaven!

4. AND lastly, Consider what Engagements lie upon you to be singularly holy, from your singular Deliverances. They that go down to the Sea in Ships, are sometimes in a Valley of the Shadow of Death, by Reason of the springing of perilous Leaks; and yet miraculously delivered,  
either

either by some wonderful Stopping of the Leak, or by GOD's sending some Ship within Sight, when they have been far out of Sight of Land; or by his bringing their near-perishing Ship near to Shore. Sometimes they have been in great Danger of being taken by Pirates, yet wonderfully preserved, either by GOD's calming of the Winds in that Part of the Sea where the Pirates have sailed, or by giving the poor pursued Ship a strong Gale of Wind to run away from their Pursuers; or by sinking the Pirates. Sometimes their Ships have been cast away, and yet they themselves wonderfully got safe to Shore upon Planks, Yards, Masts. I might be endless in enumerating their Deliverances from Drowning, from Burning, from Slavery. Sure, (Seamen) your extraordinary Salvations lay more than ordinary Engagements upon you, to praise, love, fear, obey, and trust in your Saviour and Deliverer. I have read, that the enthralled *Greeks* were so affected with their Liberty, procured by *Flaminius* the *Roman* General, that their shrill Acclamation of *Swing, Swing, a Saviour, a Saviour*, made the very Birds fall down from the Heavens. O how should Seamen be affected with their Sea-deliverances! Many that have been delivered from *Turkish* Slavery, have vowed to be Servants to their Redeemers all the Days of their Lives. Ah, Sirs, will not you be more than ordinarily GOD's Servants all the Days of your Lives, seeing you have been so oft, so wonderfully redeemed from Death it self by Him? Verily, do what you can, you will die in GOD's Debt. *As for me, GOD forbid, that I should sin against the LORD, in ceasing to pray for you:* That by the Perusal of this short and sweet Treasure, wherein the judicious and ingenious



genious Author hath well mixed Profit and Pleasure, you may learn the good and right Way even to fear the LORD, and to serve Him in Truth with all your Hearts, considering how great Things He hath done for you: This is the hearty Prayer of

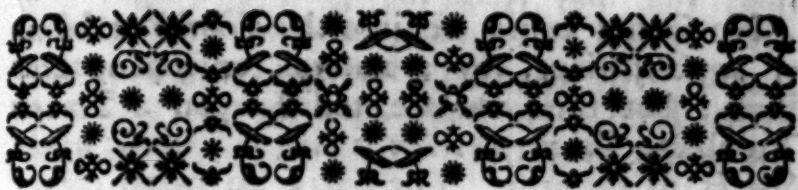
*Your cordial Friend,*

*(Earnestly desirous of a prosperous  
Voyage for your precious and im-  
mortal Souls)*

T. M.



A New

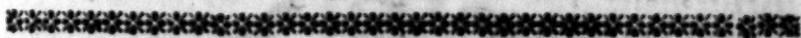


A

# *New Compass for Seamen :*

O R,

## Navigation Spiritualiz'd.



### C H A P. I.

#### O B S E R V A T I O N.



O sooner is a Ship built, launch'd, rigg'd, victuall'd and mann'd, but she is presently sent out into the boisterous Ocean, where she is never at Rest, but continually tossing and labouring, untill she be either overwhelmed and wrecked in the Sea, or through Age and Bruises grows leaky and unserviceable, and so is haled up, and ript abroad.

VOL. XLIII.

W

A P-

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

No sooner come we into the World as Men, or as Christians, by a natural, or supernatural Birth; but thus we are tossed upon a Sea of Troubles, *Job v. 7. Man is born to Trouble, as the Sparks fly upwards.* The Spark no sooner comes out of the Fire, but it flies up naturally; it needs not any external Force, but ascends from a Principle in itself: So naturally, so easily, doth Trouble rise out of Sin. There is all the Misery and Trouble in the World in our corrupt Natures. As the Spark lies close hid in the Coals, so doth Misery in Sin: Every Sin draws a Rod after it. And these Sorrows and Troubles fall not only on the Body, in those Breaches, Pains, Aches, Diseases, to which it is subject, which are but the Groans of dying Nature, and its crumbling, by Degrees, into Dust again; but on all our Employments and Callings also: These are full of Pain, Trouble and Disappointment. We earn Wages, and put it into a Bag with Holes, and disquiet ourselves in vain.

It were endless to enumerate the Sorrows of this Kind; and yet the Troubles of the Body, are but the Body of our Troubles. The Spirit of the Curse falls upon the spiritual and noble Part of Man. The Soul and Body, like to *Ezekiel's* Roll, are written full with Sorrows, both within and without. So that we make the same Report of our Lives, when we come to die, that old *Jacob* made before *Pharaoh*, *Gen. xlvii. 9. Few and evil have the Days of the Years of our Lives been. For what hath Man of all his Labour, and the Vexation of his Heart, wherein he hath laboured under the Sun? For all his Days are Sorrow, and his Travel Grief,*



Or, Navigation Spiritualiz'd. 243

Grief, yea, his Heart taketh no Rest in the Night:  
*This is also Vanity, Eccles. ii. 22, 23.*

NEITHER doth our New-birth free us from Troubles, tho' then they be sanctified, sweetned, and turned into Blessings. We put not off the human, when we put on the divine Nature; nor are we then freed from the Sense, tho' we be delivered from the Sting and Curse of them. Grace doth not presently pluck out all those Arrows that Sin hath shot into the Sides of Nature, 2 Cor. vii. 5. *When we were come into Macedonia, our Flesh had no Rest, but we were troubled on every Side.* Rev. vii. 14. *These are they that come out of great Tribulations.* The first Cry of the new-born Christian (says one) gives Hell an Alarm, and awakens the Rage both of Devils and Men against him. Hence Paul and Barnabas acquainted those new Converts, *That through much Tribulation they must enter into the Kingdom of God.* And we find the State of the Church in this World set out (*Isa. liv. 11.*) by the Similitude of a distressed Ship at Sea: *O thou afflicted [and tossed] with Tempests, and not comforted.* [Tossed] as *Jonah's Ship* was; for the same Word is there used, *Jonah i. 11, 13.* as a Vessel at Sea, violently driven without Rudder, Mast, Sail, or Tackling. Nor are we to expect Freedom from those Troubles, untill harboured in Heaven. O what large Catalogues of Experiences do the Saints carry to Heaven with them, of their various Exercises, Dangers, Trials, and marvellous Preservations and Deliverances out of all! And yet all these Troubles without, are Nothing to those within them, from Temptations, Corruptions, and Passions: Besides their own, there come daily upon them the Troubles of others, many Rivulets fall into this Channel, yea

often overflow the Banks, *Pſ. xxxiv. 19. Many are the Afflictions of the Righteous.*

### R E F L E C T I O N.

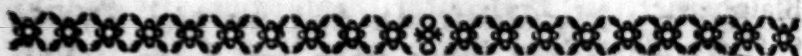
HENCE ſhould the graceleſs Heart thus reflect upon itſelf, O my Soul ! into what a Sea of Troubles art thou launched forth ! and what a ſad Caſe thou art in ! full of Trouble, and full of Sin, and theſe mutually produce each other : And that which is the moſt dreadful Conſideration of all is, that I cannot ſee the End of them. As for good Men, they ſuffer in the World as well as I, but it is but for a while, and then they ſhall ſuffer no more ; but *all Tears ſhall be wiped away from their Eyes* : But my Troubles are but the Beginning of Sorrows. If I continue as I am, I ſhall but deceive myſelf. If I conclude I ſhall be happy in the other World, becauſe I have met with ſo much Sorrow in this : For I read, *Jude 7.* That the Inhabitants of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, tho' conſumed to Aſhes, with all their Eſtates and Relations, (a ſorer temporal Judgment than ever yet beſel me) do, notwithstanding that, continue ſtill in *everlaſting Chains, under Darkneſs, in which they are reſerved unto the Judgment of the Great Day.*

THE Troubles of good Men are ſanctified to them, but mine are Fruits of the Curſe : They have ſpiritual Conſolations to ballance them, which flow into their Souls in the ſame Height and Degree as Troubles do upon their Bodies ; but I am a Stranger to their Comforts, and *intermeddle not with their Joys*. If their Hearts be ſurcharged with Trouble, they have a GOD to go to, and when they have opened their Cauſe before Him, they are eaſed, and their *Countenance is no more ſad* : But I have no Intereſt in, nor Acquaintance with

with this GOD; nor can I pray unto Him in the Spirit. My Grievs are shut up like Fire in my Bosom, which preys upon my Spirit. This is my Sorrow, and I alone must bear it. O my Soul, look round about thee! What a miserable Case art thou in? Rest no longer satisfied in it, but look out for a *Christ* also. What tho' I be a vile unworthy Wretch? Yet He promiseth to *love freely*, and invites such as are heavy laden to Him.

HENCE also should the gracious Soul reflect sweetly: And is the World so full of Trouble? O my Soul, what Cause hast thou to stand admiring at the Goodness of GOD! Thou hast hitherto had a smooth Passage comparatively to what others have had. How hath Divine Wisdom ordered my Condition? Have I been chastised with Whips? Others with Scorpions: Have I had no Peace without? Some have neither had Peace without nor within: Have I felt Trouble in my Flesh and Spirit at once? Yet have they not been extreme, either for Time or Measure. And hath the World been a *Sodom*, an *Egypt* to thee? Why then do I not long to be gone, and sigh more heartily for Deliverance? Why are the Thoughts of my LORD's Coming no sweeter to me, and the Day of my Deliverance no more panted for? And why am I no more careful to maintain Peace within, since there is so much Trouble without? Is not this it that puts Weight into all outward Troubles, and makes them sinking, that they fall upon me when my Spirit is dark or wounded?





## C H A P. II.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE Ocean is of vast Extent and Depth, not to be founded by Man. The Earth is twenty one thousand and six hundred Miles in Compass; yet the Ocean invirons it on every Side. And for its Depth, who can discover it? The Sea in Scripture is called, *The Deep*, Job xxxviii. 30. *The Great Deep*, Gen. vii. 11. *The gathering together of the Waters into one Place*, Gen. i. 9. If the vastest Mountain were cast into it, it would appear no more than the Head of a Pin in a Tun of Water.

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

THIS in a lively Manner shadows forth the infinite and incomprehensible Mercy of God; *whose Mercy is over all his Works*. In how many sweet Notions is the Mercy of God represented to us in the Scripture? He is said to be *Plenteous*, Psal. iv. 5. *Abundant*, 1 Pet. i. 3. *Rich in Mercy*, Eph. i. 4. *His Mercies are unsearchable*, Eph. iii. 8. *High as the Heavens above the Earth*, Psal. x. 4. Which are so high and vast, that the whole Earth is but a small Point to them; yea, they are not only compared to the Heavens, but to *the Depths of the Sea*, Mic. vii. 19. which can swallow up Mountains as well as Mole-hills; and in this Sea God hath drowned Sins of a dreadful Height and Aggravation. In this Sea was the Sin of *Manasseh* drowned, and of what Magnitude that was, may be seen, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3. Yea, in this Ocean of Mercy did the

LORD

LORD drown and cover the Sins of *Paul*, though a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, Injurious. "None, (saith *Augustine*) more fierce than *Paul* among the Persecutors; and therefore none greater among Sinners; yet pardoned." How hath Mercy rode in Triumph, and been glorified upon the vilest of Men? How hath it stopt the slanderous Mouth of Men and Devils! It hath yearned upon Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, Thieves, Covetous, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners; to such hath the Scepter of Mercy been stretched forth, upon their unfeigned Repentance. What doth the Spirit of GOD aim at in such Names of Mercy? But to convince poor Sinners of the abundant Fullness and Riches of it, if they will but submit to the Terms on which it is tendered to them.

IN the Vastness of the Ocean, we have also a lively Emblem of Eternity. Who can comprehend or measure the Ocean, but GOD? And who can comprehend Eternity, but He that is said to inhabit in it? Isa. lvii. 15. Though shallow, the Rivers may be drained and dried up, yet the Ocean cannot. And tho' these transitory Days, Months, and Years will at last expire; yet Eternity shall not. What is Eternity, but a constant Permanency of Persons and Things, in one and the same State for ever, beyond all Possibility of Change? The Heathens were wont to shadow it by a Circle, or a Snake twisted round. It will be to all of us, either a perpetual Day or Night, which will not be measured by Hours or Minutes. And as it cannot be measured, so neither can it ever be diminished. When Thousands of Years are gone, there is not a Minute less to come. Suppose a Bird were to come to some vast Mountain of Sand, and carry away in her Bill one Sand in a thousand Years; what a vast Time would it be ere that immortal

mortal Bird (after that Rate) had carried away the Mountain! And yet in Time this might be done: For there would be still some Diminution; but in Eternity there can be none. There be three Things in Time, in which there is a *Succession*; one Generation, Year, and Day passeth, and another comes; but Eternity is a fixed *Now*. In Time there is a *Diminution* and *Wasting*; the more is past, the less to come. In Time there is an *Alteration* of Condition; a Man may be poor To-day, and rich To-morrow; sickly this Week, and well the next; now in Contempt, and anon in Honour: But no Changes passes upon us in Eternity. As the Tree falls at Death and Judgment, so it lies for ever: If in Heaven, *thou shalt go forth no more*: If in Hell, *no Redemption thence, but the Smoke of their Torment ascendeth for ever and ever*.

### R E F L E C T I O N.

AND is the Mercy of GOD, like the great Deep, an Ocean that none can fathom? What unspeakable Comfort is this to me, may the pardoned Soul say? Did *Israel* sing a Song, when the LORD had overwhelmed their Enemies in the Sea? And shall not I break forth into his Praise, who hath drowned all my Sins in the Depth of Mercy? O my Soul, bless thou the LORD, and let his Praise ever be in thy Mouth. Mayst not thou say, that He hath gone to as high a Degree of Mercy, in pardoning thee, as ever He did in any? O my GOD, who is like unto Thee, *that pardonest Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin!* What Mercy, but the Mercy of a GOD, could cover such Abominations as mine!

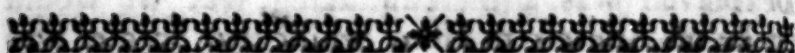
BUT O! what terrible Reflections will Conscience make from hence, upon all the Despisers of Mercy, when the Sinner's Eyes come to be opened



too late! We have heard, indeed, that the King of Heaven was a merciful King, but we would make no Address to Him, whilst that Scepter was stretched out. We heard of Balm in *Gilead*, and a Physician there, that was able and willing to cure all our Wounds; but would not commit ourselves to Him. We read that the Arms of *Christ* were open to embrace us, but we would not. O unparallell'd Folly! Now the Womb of Mercy is shut up, and shall bring no more Mercies to me for ever. Now the Gates of Grace are shut, and no Cries can open them.

How often did I hear the Bowels of Compassion sounding in the Gospel for me? But my hard and impenitent Heart would not relent; and now it is too late. I am now past out of the Ocean of Mercy, into the Ocean of Eternity, where I am fixed in the Midst of endless Misery, and shall never hear the Voice of Mercy more.

O DREADFUL Eternity! An Ocean indeed, to which this Ocean is but a Drop; for in thee no Soul shall see either Bank or Bottom. If I lie but one Night under strong Pains, how tedious doth Night seem! And how do I tell the Clock, and with for Day! In the World I might have had Life, and would not; and now, how fain would I have Death, but cannot? How quick were my Sins? And how long is their Punishment? O how shall I *dwell with everlasting Burnings*! O that God would but vouchsafe one Treaty more with me! But, alas, all Treaties are now at an End. *On Earth Peace*, Luke ii. 13. but none in Hell. O my Soul, consider these Things; let us debate this Matter seriously, before we launch into this Ocean.



## C H A P. III.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**I**T was an unadvised Saying of *Plato*, “The Sea produceth Nothing memorable.” Surely there is much of the Wisdom, Power and Goodness of *GOD* manifested in the Inhabitants of the watry Region: O *LORD*, how manifold are thy Works? In Wisdom hast Thou made them all; the Earth is full of thy Riches. So is the great and wide Sea, wherein are Things creeping innumerable, both small and great. There are Creatures of very strange Forms and Properties; some resembling a Cow, called by the *Spaniards*, *Manates*; by some supposed to be the Sea-monster spoken of by *Jeremiah*. In the Rivers of *Guiana*, *Purchas* saith, there are Fishes that have four Eyes, bearing two above and two beneath the Water when they swim; some resembling a Toad, and very poisonous. How strange both in Shape and Property is the *Sword-fish* and *Thrasher*, that fight with the *Whale*? Even our own Seas produce Creatures of strange Shapes, but the Commonness takes off the Wonder.

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

**T**HUS doth the Heart of Man naturally swarm and abound with strange and monstrous Lusts and Abominations, *Rom. i. 29, 30, 31. Being filled with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, Covetousness, Maliciousness, full of Envy, Murder, Debate, Deceit, Malignity.* O what a Swarm is here!

here! And yet there are Multitudes more in the Depths of the Heart. And it is no Wonder, considering that with this Nature we received the Spawn of the blackest and vilest Abominations. This Original Sin is productive of them all; which is one and the same, for Sort and Kind, in all the Children of *Adam*; even as the reasonable Soul, though every Man hath his own Soul distinct from another Man's, yet is it the same for Kind in all Men. So that whatever Abominations are in the Hearts and Lives of the vilest *Sodomites*, and most poffigate Wretches under Heaven, there is the same Matter in thy Heart out of which they were shaped and formed. In the Depths of the Heart they are conceived, and thence they crawl out of the Eyes, Hands, Lips, and all the Members, *Matt. xv. 18, 19. Those Things (saith Christ) which proceed out of the Mouth, come forth from the Heart, and defile a Man. For out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, false Witness, Blasphemies; even such Monsters as would make one tremble to behold. The Apostle, in 1 Cor. v. 1. tells us of a Sin, not to be named; so monstrous, that Nature itself startles at it; even such Monsters are generated in the Depths of the Heart. Whence comes Evil? was a Question that much puzzled the Philosophers of old. Now here you may see whence they come, and when they are begotten.*

### REFLECTION.

AND are there such strange Abominations in the Heart of Man? Then how is he degenerated from his primitive Perfection! His Streams were once as clear as chrystal, and there was no unclean Creature moving in them. What a stately Fabrick was the Soul at first! And what holy Inhabitants possessed



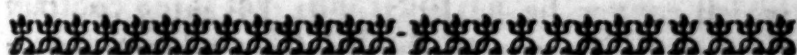
## 252 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

possessed the Rooms thereof ! But now, (as God speaks of *Idumea*) *Isaiah xxxiv. 11. The Line of Confusion is stretched out upon it, and the Stones of Emptiness; the Cormorant and Bittern possess it, the Owl and the Raven dwell in it. O sad Change!* How sadly may we look backwards to our first State, and take up the Words of *Job, O that I were as in Months past! as in the Days of my Youth; when the Almighty was yet with me, when I put on Righteousness, and it cloathed me, when my Glory was fresh in me, Job xxix. 2, 4, 5.*

AGAIN, think, O my Soul, what a miserable Condition the Unregenerate abide in ! thus swarmed and over-run with hellish Lusts. What a tumultuous Sea is such a Soul ! How do these Lusts rage within them ! How do they contest for the Throne, and usually take it by Turns ! For as all Diseases are contrary to Health, yet some contrary to each other ; so are Lusts. Hence poor Creatures are hurried on to different Kinds of Servitude, according to the Nature of that Lust that is in the Throne, and like the Lunatick, *Matt. xvii.* are sometimes cast into the *Water*, and sometimes into the *Fire*. Well might the Prophet say, *The Wicked is like a troubled Sea, that cannot rest, Isaiah lvii. 20.* They have no Peace now in the Service of Sin, and less they shall have hereafter, when they receive the Wages of Sin. *There is no Peace to the Wicked, saith my GOD.* They indeed cry, *Peace, Peace* ; but my GOD doth not say so. The last Issue of this is eternal Death ; no sooner is it delivered of its deceitful Pleasures, but presently it falls in Travail again, and brings forth Death, *James i. 15.*

AND is the Heart such a Sea, abounding with monstrous Abominations ? Then stand astonished,  
O my

O my Soul, at that Free Grace which hath delivered thee from so sad a Condition! O fall down, and kiss the Feet of Mercy, that moved so freely and seasonably to thy Rescue! LORD, what am I, that I should be taken? Reflect, O my Soul, upon the Conceptions and Births of Lusts, in the Days of Vanity, which thou hast blushed to own. O what black Imaginations, hellish Desires, vile Affections, are lodged there! Who made me differ? Or, how came I to be thus wonderfully separated? Surely, it is by thy Free Grace, and Nothing else, that I am what I am: And by that Grace I have *escaped* (to mine own Astonishment) *the Corruption that is in the World through Lust*. O that ever the Holy GOD should set his Eyes on such an one, or cast a Look of Love towards me, in whom were Legions of unclean Lusts and Abominations!



CHAP. IV.

OBSERVATION.

SEAS are in a continual Motion; they have Flux and Reflux, by which they are kept from Putrefaction; like a Fountain it cleanses itself, *Isaiah lvii. 20. It cannot rest, but casts up Mire and Dirt*; whereas Lakes and Ponds, whose Waters are standing and dead, corrupt and stink: And it is observed by Seamen, that in the Southern Parts of the World, where the Sea is more calm and settled, it is more corrupt and unfit for Use; so is the Sea of *Sodom*, call'd, *the dead Sea*.

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

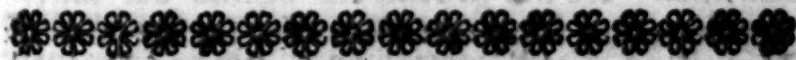
THUS do regenerate Souls purify themselves, and work out Corruption that defiles them, they cannot suffer it to settle there, 1 John iii. 3. *He purifieth himself, even as He is pure: Keepeth himself, that the Wicked One toucheth him not,* 1 John v. 18. They are Doves delighting in Cleanness, *Isaiah xxxiii. 15. He despiseth the Gain of Oppression, he shaketh his Hands from holding of Bribes, stoppeth his Ears from hearing Blood, and shutteth his Eyes from seeing Evil.* See how all Senses and Members are guarded against Sin: But it is quite contrary with the Wicked; there is no Principle of Holiness in them, to expose or expel Corruption. It lies in their Hearts, as Mud in a Lake or Well, which settles and corrupts more and more. Hence, *Ezek. xlvii. 11. their Hearts are compared to miry Places, which cannot be healed: The Meaning is, that the purest Streams of the Gospel, which cleanse others, make them worse than before, as Abundance of Rain will a miry Place: It cannot run through them, and be glorified, as it doth in gracious Souls: All the Means and Endeavours used to cleanse them, are in vain; all the Grace of God they receive in vain: They hold fast Deceit, they refuse to let it go,* Jer. viii. 5. Sin is not in them as floating Weeds upon the Sea, but as Spots in the Leopard's Skin, *Jer. xiii. 21. or Letters engraven in Marble or Brass, with a Pen of Iron, and Point of a Diamond. Wickedness is sweet in their Mouths, they roll it under their Tongues,* Job xx. 12. No Threats or Promises can divorce them from it.

## R E F L E C T I O N.

LORD! this is the very Frame of my Heart,  
 may the graceless Soul say: My Corruption quietly  
 settles



settles in me, my Heart labours not against it: I am a Stranger to that Conflict which is daily maintained in the regenerate Soul. Glorified Souls have no such Conflict, because Grace in them stands alone, and is perfectly triumphant over all its Opposites; and graceless Souls have no such Conflict, because in them Corruption stands alone, and hath no other Principle to make Opposition to it. And this is my Case, O LORD: I am full of vain Hopes, indeed, but had I a living Hope to dwell for ever with so holy a GOD, I could not but be daily purifying myself. But, O! what will the End of this be? I have Cause to tremble at that last and dreadfullest Curse in the Book of GOD, *Rev. xxii. 11. Let him that is filthy, be filthy still.* Is it not as much as if GOD should say, Let them alone, I will spend no more Rods upon them, no more Means shall be used about them; but I will reckon with them for all Things in another World. O my Soul, what a dismal Reckoning will that be! Ponder with thyself in the mean Time those terrible and awakening Texts, that, if possible, this fatal Issue may be prevented. See *Isa. i. 5. Hos. iv. 14. Jer. vi. 29, 30. Heb. vi. 8.*



## CHAP. V.

### OBSERVATION.

**H**OW watchful and quick-sighted are Seamen to prevent Danger? If the Wind die away, and then fresh up Southerly; or if they see the Sky hazy, they provide for a Storm: If by the Prospective

## 256 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

tive-Glass they see a Pirate at the greatest Distance, they clear the Gun-Room, prepare for Fight, and bear up, if able to deal with him; if not, they keep close by the Wind, make all the Sail they can, and bear away. If they suppose themselves, by their Reckoning, near Land, how often do they sound? And if upon a Coast with which they are unacquainted, how careful are they to get a Pilot that knows and is acquainted with it?

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

THUS watchful ought we to be in spiritual Concernments. We should study, and be acquainted with *Satan's Wiles*: The Apostle takes it for granted, that Christians are not ignorant of his *Devices*. "The Serpent's Eye (as one saith) would do well in the Dove's Head." The Devil is a cunning Pirate, he puts out false Colours, and ordinarily comes up to the Christian in the Disguise of a Friend.

O THE manifold Depths and Stratagems of *Satan*, to destroy Souls! Though he hath no Wisdom to do himself Good, yet Policy enough to do us Mischief. He lies in Ambush behind our lawful Comforts and Employments: Yet for the most of Men, how careless are they, suspecting no Danger! Their Souls, like *Laiety*, dwell carelessly; their Senses unguarded. O what an easy Prize doth the Devil make of them!

INDEED, if it were with us, as with *Adam* in Innocency, or as it was with *Christ* in the Days of his Flesh, (who by Reason of that overflowing Fullness of Grace that dwelt in Him, was secured from Danger) the Case then were otherwise; but we have a Traytor within, *James* i. 14, 15. as well

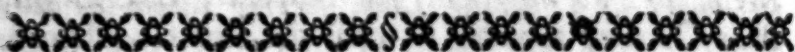
as a Tempter without: *Our Adversary the Devil goes about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.* And like Beasts of the Forest, poor Souls lie down before him, and become his Prey.

R E F L E C T I O N.

LORD! how doth the Care, Wisdom and Vigilancy of Men in temporal Things, condemn my Carelessness in the deep Concernments of my Soul! What Care and Labour is there to secure a perishing Life, Liberty, or Treasure! When was I thus solicitous for my Soul, though its Value be inestimable, and its Dangers far greater? Self-preservation is one of the deepest Principles in Nature. There is not the poorest Worm or Flie, but will shun Danger if it can; yet I am so far from shunning those Dangers to which my Soul lies continually exposed, that I often run upon Temptations, and voluntarily expose it to its Enemies. I see, LORD, how watchful, jealous, and laborious thy People are; what Prayers, Tears, and Groans, searching of Heart, Mortification of Lusts, guarding of Senses, and all accounted too little by them. Have not I a Soul to save or lose eternally, as well as they? Yet I cannot withstand one Temptation. O how am I convinced and condemned, not only by others Care and Vigilance, but by my own too, in lower Matters!







## C H A P. VI.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**I**T is just Matter of Admiration, to see so great a Body as a Ship is, and when under Sail too, before a strong Wind, by which it is carried, as the Clouds, with marvellous Force and Speed, yet to be commanded with Ease, by so small a Thing as the *Helm* is. The Scripture takes Notice of it as a Matter worthy our Consideration, *Jam. iii. 4. Behold also the Ships, which though they be great, and driven of fierce Winds, yet they are turned about with a small Helm, whithersoever the Governor listeth.*

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

To the same Use has GOD designed Conscience in Man, which being regulated by the Word and Spirit of GOD, is to steer his whole Conversation. Conscience is as the Oracle of GOD, the Judge and Determiner of our Actions, whether they be good or evil; and it lays the strongest Obligations upon the Creature to obey its Dictates. For it binds under the Reason and Consideration of the sovereign Will of the great GOD; so that as often as Conscience from the Word convinceth us of any Sin or Duty, it lays such a Bond upon us to obey it, as no Power under Heaven can dispense with. Angels cannot do it, much less Man, for that would be to exalt themselves above GOD. Therefore it is an high and dreadful Way of Sinning, to rebel against Conscience, when it convinces of Sin or Duty.

Duty. Conscience sometimes reasons it out with Men, and shews them the Necessity of changing their Course, arguing it from the clearest Maxims of right Reason, as well as from the indisputable Sovereignty of God.

As for Instance: It convinceth their very Reason, that Things of eternal Duration are infinitely to be preferred to all momentary and perishing Things. And it is our Duty to chuse them, and make all temporary Concernments to stand aside, and give Place to them: Yet though Men be convinced of this, their stubborn Will stands out, and will not yield to the Conviction.

FURTHER, It argues from this acknowledged Truth, that all the Delights of this World are but a miserable Portion, and that it is the highest Folly to adventure an immortal Soul for them. Alas, what Remembrance is there of them in Hell? They are the Waters that pass away: What have they left of all their Mirth, but a tormenting Sting? It convinceth them clearly also, that in Matters of deep Concern, it is an high Point of Wisdom, to apprehend and improve the Opportunities of them, *Prov. x. 5. He that gathers in Summer is a wise Son. Eccles. viii. 5. A wise Man's Heart discerns both Time and Judgment. There is a Season to every Purpose, Eccles. iii. 1. viz. A Nick of Time, and happy Juncture, when if a Man strikes in, he doth his Work effectually, and with much Facility. Such Seasons Conscience convinceth the Soul of, and often whispers thus in its Ear: Now strike in! Close with this Motion of the Spirit, and be happy for ever! Thou mayst never have such a Gale for Heaven any more. Now, though these be allowed Maxims of Reason, and Conscience enforce them strongly on the Soul, yet it cannot prevail;*

the

the proud stubborn Will rebels, and will not be guided by it.

### REFLECTION.

AH LORD! such an Heart have I had before Thee; thus obstinate, thus rebellious, so uncontrollable by Conscience. Many a Time hath Conscience thus whispered in my Ear; many a Time hath it stood in my Way, as the Angel did in *Balaam's*, or the Cherubim that kept the Way of the Tree of Life, with flaming Swords turning every Way. Thus hath it stood to oppose me in the Way of my Lusts. How often hath it calmly debated the Case with me? And how sweetly hath it expostulated with me? How clearly hath it convinced of Sin, Danger, and Duty, with strong Demonstration? How terribly hath it menaced my Soul, and set the Point of the Threatning at my very Breast? And yet my head-strong Affections will not be remanded by it. I have obeyed the Voice of every Temptation: But Conscience hath lost its Authority with me. Ah LORD! what a sad Condition am I in, both in Respect of Sin and Misery? My Sin receives dreadful Aggravations; for Rebellion and Presumption are hereby added to it. I have violated the strongest Bonds that ever were laid upon a Creature. If my Conscience had not thus convinced and warned, the Sin had not been so great. Ah! this is to sin with an high Hand, to come near to the great and unpardonable Transgression, *Psalms* xix. 13. O how dreadful a Way of Sinning is this, with open Eyes! And as my Sin is thus out of Measure sinful, so my Punishment will be out of Measure dreadful, if I persist in this Rebellion. LORD, Thou hast said, *such shall be beaten with many Stripes*; yea, LORD, and if ever my Conscience, which by Rebellion is  
now



now grown silent, should be in Judgment awaken-  
ed in this Life, what an Hell should I have within  
me! How would it thunder and roar upon me, and  
surround me with Terrors!

I KNOW no Length of Time can wear out of its  
Memory what I have done; no Violence or Force  
can suppress it; no Greatness of Power can stifle it;  
it will take the mightiest Monarch by the Throat;  
no Musick, Pleasures or Delights can charm it.  
O Conscience! thou art the sweetest Friend, or  
the dreadfulest Enemy in the World; thy Conso-  
lations are incomparably sweet, and thy Terrors  
insupportable. Ah let me stand it out no longer  
against Conscience; the very Ship in which I sail,  
is a Confutation of my Madness, that rush greedily  
into Sin against both Reason and Conscience, and  
will not be commanded by it. Surely, O my Soul,  
this will be Bitterness in the End.



## CHAP. VII.

### OBSERVATION.

**W**E have an elegant and lively Description,  
*Psalms cvii. 25, 26, 27. He commandeth  
and raiseth the stormy Wind, which lifteth up the  
Waves thereof: They mount up to Heaven, they go  
down again to the Depths; their Soul is melted be-  
cause of Trouble, they reel to and fro, they stagger  
like a drunken Man, they are at their Wits End:*  
Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *All Wisdom is swal-  
lowed up.* What strange Deliverances have many  
Seamen

Seamen had? How often have they yielded themselves for dead Men, and thought the next Sea would have swallowed them up? How earnestly then do they cry for Mercy? And pray in a Storm, though they regarded it not at other Times?

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

THESE dreadful Storms do at once discover to us the mighty Power of GOD in raising them, and the abundant Goodness of GOD in preserving poor Creatures in them.

1. THE Power of GOD is graciously manifested in raising them: The Wind is one of the LORD's Wonders, *Psal. cvii. 24, 25. They that go down to the Sea, see the Works of the LORD, and his Wonders in the Deep; for He commandeth and raiseth the stormy Winds.* Yea, Verse 18. GOD appropriates it as a peculiar Work of His; *He causeth his Wind to blow.* Hence, He is said in Scripture, *to bring them forth of his Treasury, Psal. cxxxvii. 7.* There they are locked up and reserved, not a Gust can break out, 'till He call for it to go and execute his Pleasure: Yea, He is said to *hold them in his Fist, Prov. xxx. 4.* What is more incapable of Holding than the Wind? Yet GOD holds it. And although it be a strong and terrible Creature, He controlls and rules it. Yea, the Scripture sets forth GOD, as *riding upon the Wings of the Wind, Psal. xviii. 10.* It is a borrowed Speech from the Manner of Men, who, when they would shew their Pomp and Greatness, ride upon some stately Horse or Chariot; so the LORD to manifest the Greatness of his Power, rides upon the Wings of the Wind, and will be admired in so terrible a Creature.

AND

AND no less of his glorious Power appears in remanding them, than in raising them. The Heathens ascribe this Power to their God *Æolus*; but we know this is the sole Prerogative of the true God; it is He that makes *the Storm a Calm*, Psalm cvii. 29. And it is He that changes them from Point to Point as He pleaseth; for He hath appointed them in their Circuits, Eccles. i. 6. *The Wind goeth towards the South, and turneth about unto the North; it whirleth about continually, and returneth again according to its Circuits.*

2. AND as we should adore his Power in the Winds, so ought we to admire his Goodness in preserving Men in the Height of all their Fury and Violence. O what a marvellous Work of God is here! That Men should be kept in a poor, weak Vessel, upon the wild and stormy Ocean, where the Wind hath its full Stroke, and they are driven before it as a Wreck upon the Seas, is a Work of infinite Goodness and Power: That those Winds which rend the very Earth, Mountains and Rocks; *break the Cedars, yea, the Cedars of Lebanon*, should not destroy you as in a Moment, is an amazing Instance of Almighty Power, an astonishing Work of Mercy. O how dreadful is this Creature, the Winds, sometimes to you? And how doth it make your Hearts shake within you? If but a Plank spring, or a Bolt give Way, you are all lost. Sometimes the LORD for the Magnifying of the Riches of his Goodness upon you, drives you to such Exigencies, that, as St. Paul speaks in a like Case, *Acts xvii. 20. All Hope of being saved is taken away.* Nothing but Death before your Eyes. The LORD commands a Wind out of his Treasury, bids it go and lift up the terrible Waves, lock you in upon the Shore, and drive you upon the Rock, so that no Art can save you;



## 264 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

you; and then sends you a Piece of Wreck, or some other Means to land you safe: And all this to give you an Experiment of his Goodness, that you may learn to fear that GOD, in whose Hand your Breath is.

AND it may be for the Present, your Hearts are much affected: Conscience works strongly, it smites you for Sins formerly committed. Now, saith Conscience, GOD is come in this Storm to reckon with thee for these Things. But, alas, all this is but a Morning Dew; no sooner is that Storm without allay'd, but all is quiet within too. How little of the Goodness of GOD abides kindly and effectually upon the Heart.

### R E F L E C T I O N.

How often hath this glorious Power and Goodness of GOD passed before me in dreadful Storms and Tempests at Sea? He hath utter'd his Voice in those stormy Winds, and spoken in a terrible Manner by them; yet how little have I been affected with it? *The LORD hath his Way in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm,* Nah. i. 3. To some He hath walked in Ways of Judgment and Wrath, sending them down in a Moment to Hell; but to me in a Way of Forbearance and Mercy. Ah, how often have I been upon the very Brink of Eternity? Had not GOD shifted or allay'd the Wind, in a Moment I had gone down into Hell. What Workings of Conscience were then upon me? And what terrible Apprehensions had I of my eternal Condition? What Vows did I make in that Distress, and how earnestly did I beg for Mercy? But, LORD, though thy Vows are upon me, yet have I been the same, yea, added to the Measure of my Sins. Neither the Bonds Thou hast laid upon

upon me, nor the sacred Vows I have laid upon myself, could restrain me from Iniquity.

AH LORD, what an Heart have I? What Love, Pity and Goodness have I sinned against? If GOD had but respited Judgment so long, what a Mercy were it! Sure I am, the Damned would account it so: But to give me such a Space to repent, what an invaluable Mercy is this! And do I thus requite the LORD, and pervert and abuse his Goodness? Surely, O my Soul, if this be the Fruit of all thy Preservations, they are rather Reservations to some further and sorer Judgment. How dreadfully will Justice at last avenge the Quarrel of abused Mercy? *Josh. xxi. 20.* How grievously did GOD take it from the *Israelites*, that they provoked him at the Sea, even at the *Red Sea*? *Psal. cvi. 7.* where GOD had wrought their Deliverance in such a miraculous Way.

EVEN thus have I sinned, not only against the Laws of GOD, but against the Love of GOD. In the last Storm He shot off his Warning-Piece; in the next He may discharge his Murdering-Piece against my Soul and Body. O my Soul, hath He given thee *such Deliverances as these, and dar'st thou again break his Commandments!* *Ezra ix. 13, 14.* O let me pay the Vows that my Lips have uttered in my Distress, lest the LORD recover his Glory from me in a Way of Judgment!





## C H A P. VIII.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE Mariner wants no Skill and Wisdom to improve several Winds, and make them serviceable to his End : A bare Side-wind, by his Skill in shifting and managing the Sails, will serve his Turn ; he will not lose the Advantage of one Breath or Gale that may be useful to him. I have many Times wondered to see two Ships sailing in a direct Counter-motion, by one and the same Wind. Their Skill and Wisdom herein is admirable.

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

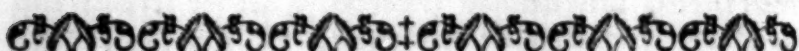
**T**HUS prudent and skilful are Men in lower Matters, and yet how ignorant and unskilful in the everlasting Affairs of their Souls ! All their Invention, Judgment, Wit, and Memory seem to be prest for the Service of the Flesh. They can learn an Art quickly, and arrive to great Exactness in it ; but in Soul-matters, no Knowledge at all ; they can understand the Equator, Meridian, and Horizon. And so in other Arts and Sciences, we find Men endow'd with rare Abilities, and singular Sagacity. Some have piercing Apprehensions, solid Judgments, rare Invention, and excellent Elocution : But put them upon any spiritual Matter, and the weakest Christian, even a Babe in *Christ*, shall excel them therein, and give a far better Account of the Work of Grace, the Life of Faith than these can.



REFLECTION.

How inexcusable art thou, O my Soul! and how confounded must thou needs stand before the Bar of GOD, in that great Day? Thou hadst a Talent of natural Parts committed to thee, but which Way have they been improv'd? I had an Understanding indeed, but it was not sanctified; a Memory, but it was like a Sieve, that let go the Corn, and retain'd Nothing but Chaff; Wit and Invention, but alas none to do myself Good. Ah! how will these rise in Judgment against me, and stop my Mouth? What Account shall I give for them in that Day?

AGAIN: Are Men (otherwise prudent) such Fools in spiritual Things? Then let the poor weak Christian, whose natural Parts are blunt and dull, admire the Riches of GOD's Free Grace to him. O what an astonishing Consideration is this! That GOD should pass by Men of the profoundest natural Parts, and chuse me, whose natural Endowments, compared with theirs, are but as Lead to Gold! Thus under the Law He pass'd by the Lion and Eagle, and chose the Lamb and Dove. O how should it make me to advance Grace, as *Christ* doth upon the same Account, *Matt. xi. 25. I thank Thee, Father, LORD of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast hid these Things from the Wise and Prudent, and revealed them to Babes.* And let it ever be an humbling Consideration to me: For who made me to differ? Is not this one principal Thing GOD aims at, in calling such as I am; that boasting may be excluded, and Himself alone exalted.



## C H A P. IX.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**S**EAMEN are very watchful to take their Opportunity of Wind and Tide; and it much concerns them so to be: The Neglect of a few Hours, sometimes loses them their Passage, and proves a great Detriment to them. They know the Wind is a variable Thing; they must take it when they may; they are unwilling to lose one Breath, that may be serviceable to them.

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

**T**HERE are also Seasons and Gales of Grace for our Souls; golden Opportunities afforded to Men, the Neglect of which proves the Loss and Ruin of Souls. God hath given unto Men a Day of Visitation, which He hath *limited*, Heb. iv. 7. and keeps an exact Account of every Year, Month, and Day, that we have enjoy'd it. The longest Date of it can be but the Time of this Life. This is our Day to work in, and upon this small Thread the Weight of Eternity hangs. But sometimes the Season of Grace is ended, before the Night of Death comes; the *accepted Time* is gone, Men frequently out-live it, *Luke xix. 44. 2 Cor. vi. 2.* Or, if the outward Means of Salvation be continued, yet the Spirit many Times withdraws from those Means, and ceases any more to strive with Men; and

and then the Blessing, Power, and Efficacy is gone from them, and instead thereof, a Curse seizeth the Soul.

THEREFORE it is a Matter of high Importance, to apprehend those Seasons. How pathetically doth *Christ* bewail *Jerusalem* up this Account! *Luke xix. 42. O that thou hadst known, at least in this thy Day, the Things of thy Peace! but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* If a Company of Seamen be set Ashore upon some uninhabited Island, with this Advice, to be A-board again exactly at such an Hour, else they must be left behind: How doth it concern them to be punctual in their Time! The Lives of those Men depend upon a Quarter of an Hour. Many a Soul hath perished eternally, because they knew not the Time of their Visitation.

### REFLECTION.

WHAT golden Seasons for Salvation hast thou enjoy'd, O my Soul! What *Halcyon* Days of Gospel Light and Grace hadst thou had! How have the precious Days of Grace blown to no Purpose upon thee, and the Spirit waited and striven with thee in vain: *The Kingdom of Heaven* (being open'd in the Gospel Dispensations) *hath suffered Violence.* Multitudes have been pressing into it in my Days, and I myself have sometimes been almost persuaded, and not far from the Kingdom of GOD: I have gone as far as Conviction of Sin; yea, I have been carried by the Power of the Gospel, to turn to GOD; but Sin hath been too subtle for me: I see my Resolutions were but as an early Cloud, or Morning-dew; and now my Heart is cold and dead again, settled upon its Lees. Ah! I have Cause to fear and tremble, lest GOD hath left me under that Curse, *Rev. xx. 11. Let him that is fil-*



*thy, be filthy still.* I fear I am become as that miry Place, *Ezek. xlviii. 11.* that shall not be healed by the Streams of the Gospel, *but given to Salt,* and cursed into perpetual Barrenness. Ah LORD, wilt Thou leave me so ! And shall thy Spirit strive no more with me ? Then it had been good for me that I had never been born. If I have trifled out this Season, and irrecoverably lost it, then I may take up that Lamentation, *Jer. viii. 20.* and say, *My Harvest is past, my Summer is ended, and I am not saved.*

EVERY Creature knows its Time, even the Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, know the Time of their Coming, *Jer. viii. 7.* How brutish am I, that have not known the Time of my Visitation ! Oh Thou that art the LORD of Life and Time, command one gracious Season more, and make it effectual to me, before I go hence, and be seen no more !



## C H A P. X.

### O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE most wise God hath so dispensed his Bounty to the several Nations of the World, that one standing in Need of another's Commodities, there might be a Commerce and Traffick maintain'd amongst them all, and all combining in a common League, may, by the Help of Navigation, exhibit mutual Succours to each other.

APPLICATION.

THUS hath GOD distributed the more precious Gifts and Graces of his Spirit among his People: Some excelling in one Grace, some in another, though every Grace, in some Degree, be in them all. As in Nature, though there be all the Faculties in all, yet some Faculties are in some more lively and vigorous than in others; some have a more vigorous Eye, others a more ready Ear, others a more voluble Tongue; so it is in Spirituals. *Abraham* excell'd in Faith, *Job* in Patience, *John* in Love. These were their peculiar Excellencies. All the elect Vessels are not of one Quantity; yet even those that excel others in some particular Grace, come short in other Respects of those they so excel, and may be much improv'd by Converse with such, as in some Respects are much below them. The solid, wise, and judicious Christian may want the Liveliness of Affection, and Tenderness of Heart, that appears in the weak; and one that excels in Gifts and Utterance, may learn Humility from the very Babes in *Christ*.

AND one principal Reason of this different Distribution, is to maintain a Fellowship among them all, *1 Cor. 12. 21. The Head cannot say to the Feet I have no Need of you.* As in a Family, where there is much Business to be done, even the little Children bear a Part, according to their Strength, *Jer. vii. 18. The Children gather Wood, the Fathers kindle the Fire, the Women knead the Dough:* So in the Family of *Christ*, the weakest Christian is serviceable to the strong.

THERE be precious Treasures in these earthen Vessels, for which we should trade by mutual Communion. The Preciousness of the Treasure, should draw out our Desires and Endeavours after it; and the

the Consideration of the Brittleness of those Vessels in which they are kept, should cause us to be the more expeditious in our trading with them, and make the quicker Returns: For when those Vessels (I mean the Bodies of the Saints) are broken by Death, there is no more to be gotten out of them. That Treasure of Grace which made them such profitable Companions on Earth, then ascends with them in Heaven: And then, though they be more excellent than on Earth, yet we can have no more Communion with them, 'till we come to Glory ourselves. Now therefore it behoves us to be enriching ourselves by Communication of what God hath dropt into us, and Improvement of them; as one well notes. We should do by Saints, as we use to do by some choice Book lent us for a few Days, we should fix in our Memories, or transcribe all the choice Notions we meet with in it, that they may be our own when the Book is called for, and we can have it no longer by us.

### REFLECTION.

LORD, how short do I come of my Duty in communicating to, or receiving Good by others! My Soul is either empty and barren, or if there be any Treasure in it, yet it is but as a Treasure locked up in some Chest, whose Key is lost when it should be open'd for the Use of others. Ah LORD! I have sinned greatly, not only by vain Words, but sinful Silence. I have been but of little Use in the World.

How little also have I gotten by Communion with others? Some, it may be, that are of my own Size, or Judgment, or that I am otherwise obliged to, I can delight to converse with: But O, where is that Largeness of Heart, and general Delight I should



should have to, and in all thy People? How many of my old dear Acquaintance are now in Heaven, whose Tongues were as choice Silver, while they were here, *Prov. x. 20.* And, blessed Souls! how communicative were they of what Thou gavest them? O what an Improvement had I made of my Talent this Way, had I been diligent! LORD pardon my Neglect of those blessed Advantages. O let all my Delight be in thy Saints, who are the excellent of the Earth. Let me never go out of their Company, without an Heart more warmed, quickened, and enlarged, than when I came amongst them.



## · C H A P. XI.

### O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE Rocks, tho' situate in the boisterous and tempestuous Ocean, yet abide firm and immoveable from Age to Age: The impetuous Waves dash against them with great Violence, but cannot remove them out of their Place. And although, sometimes they wash over them, and make them to disappear, yet there they remain fix'd and impregnable.

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

**T**HIS is a lively Emblem of the Condition of the Church, amidst all Dangers and Oppositions wherewith it is assaulted in this World. These Waves roar and beat with Violence  
against

against it, but with as little Success as the Sea against the Rocks, *Matt. xvi. 18. Upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* The Gates of Hell, are the Power and Policy of Hell, an Allusion to the Gates of the *Jews*, wherein their Ammunition for War was lodged, which also were Seats of Judicature, where sate the Judges: But yet these Gates of Hell shall not prevail. Nay, this Rock is not only invincible in the Midst of their Violence, but also breaks all that dash against it, *Zech. xii. 3. In that Day I will make Jerusalem a burthensome Stone for all People : All that burden themselves with it, shall be cut in Pieces, though all the People of the Earth be gatherd against it.* An Allusion to one that assays to roll some great Stone against the Hill, which at last returns upon him, and crushes him to Pieces.

AND the Reason why it is thus firm and impregnable, is not from itself ; for alas, so considered, it is weak, and obnoxious to Ruin ; but from the Almighty Power of God, which guards and preserves it Day and Night, *Psal. xlii. 5, 6. GOD is in the Midst of her, she shall not be moved : GOD shall help her, and that right early.* And this assiduous Succour to his People, and their great Security thereby, is set forth in the Scriptures by a pleasant Variety of Metaphors and Emblems, *Zech. ii. 5. I (saith the LORD) will be a Wall of Fire round about it.* Some think this Phrase alludes to the Cherubim, that kept the Way of the Tree of Life with flaming Swords : Others, to the fiery Chariots round about *Dotham*, where *Elisba* was : But most think it to be an Allusion to an ancient Custom of Travellers in the Desarts ; who to prevent the Assaults of wild Beasts in the Night, made a circular Fire round about them, which was as a Wall to them. Thus will  
GOD

GOD be to his People, a *Wall of Fire*, which none can scale. So *Exod.* iii. 3, 4, 5. We have an excellent Emblem of the Churches low and dangerous Condition, and admirable Preservation. You have here, both a Marvel and a Mystery: The Marvel was to see a Bush all on Fire, and yet not consumed. The Mystery is this; the Bush represented the sad Condition of the Church in *Ægypt*; the Fire flaming upon it, the grievous Afflictions, Troubles, and Bondage it was in there; the remaining of the Bush unconsumed, the strange and admirable Preservation of the Church in those Troubles. It lived there as the three noble *Jews*, untouch'd in the Midst of a burning Fiery Furnace: And the *Angel of the LORD* in a Flame of Fire in the Midst of the Bush, was Nothing else but the *LORD Jesus Christ*, powerfully and graciously present with his People, amidst all their Dangers and Sufferings. The *LORD* is exceeding tender over them, and jealous for them, as that Expression imports, *Zech.* ii. 8. *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of mine Eye.* He that strikes at them, strikes at the Face of GOD; and at the most excellent Part of the Face, the Eye; and at the most tender and precious Part of the Eye, the Apple of the Eye. And yet (as a learned Modern observes) this People of whom He uses this tender Expression, were none of the best of *Israel* neither; but the Residue that staid behind in *Babylon*, when their Brethren were gone to rebuild the Temple; and yet over these, is He as tender, as Man is over his Eye.

### REFLECTION.

AND is the Security of the Church so great! and its Preservation so admirable, amidst all Storms and Tempests! Then why art thou so subject to despond, O my Soul, in the Day of *Sion's* Trouble?  
Sen-



276 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

Sensible thou wast, and oughtest to be ; but no Reason to hang down the Head through Discouragement, much less to forsake *Sion* in her Distress, for Fear of being ruin'd with her.

WHAT *David* spake to *Abiathar*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 23. that may *Sion* speak to all her Sons and Daughters in all their Distresses : *Though he that seeketh thy Life, seeketh Mine also, yet with Me shalt thou be in Safety.* God hath entail'd great Salvation and Deliverances upon *Sion* ; and blessed are all her Friends and Favourers ; the Rock of Ages is her Defence. Fear not therefore, O my Soul, though the Hills be removed, and cast into the Midst of the Sea. O let my Faith triumph, my Heart rejoice upon this Ground of Comfort. I see the same Rocks now, and in the same Place and Condition they were many Years ago. Though they have endured many Storms, yet there they abide ; and so shall *Sion*, when the proud Waves have spent their Fury and Rage against it.



C H A P. XII.

O B S E R V A T I O N.

HOW exceeding solicitous and adventurous are Seamen for a small Portion of the World ? How prodigal of Strength and Life for it ? They will run to the Ends of the Earth, engage in a thousand Dangers, upon the Probability of getting a small Estate. Hopes of Gain makes them willing to adventure their Liberty, yea, their Life ; and encourage

courage them to endure Heat, Cold, and Hunger, and a thousand Streights and Difficulties, to which they are frequently exposed.

APPLICATION.

How hot and eager are Mens Affections after the World? And how remiss and cold towards Things eternal? They are careful and troubled about many Things, but seldom mind the great and necessary Matter, *Luke x. 40.* They can rise early, go to Bed late, eat the Bread of Carefulness: But when did they so deny themselves for their poor Souls? Their Heads are full of Designs and Projects to get or advance an Estate: *We will go into such a City, continue there a Year, and buy and sell, and get Gain Jam. iv. 13.* This is the Master design, which engrosseth all their Time, Studies, and contrivances, The Will hath past a Decree for it, the Heart and Affections are fully let out to it, *They will be rich, 1 Tim. vi. 9.* This Decree of the Will, the Spirit of God takes deep Notice of it, and indeed it is the clearest Discovery of a Man's Condition: For, look what is highest in the Estimation, first and last in the Thoughts, and upon which we spend our Time and Strength with Delight; certainly, that is our Treasure. The Heads and Hearts of good Men are full of solicitous Cares and Fears about their spiritual Condition: The great Design they drive on, to which all other Things are but Things on the Bye, is to make sure their Calling and Election. This is the Weight and Bias of their Spirit; if their Hearts wander after any other Thing, This reduces them again.

## REFLECTION.

LORD, this hath been my Manner from my Youth, may the worldly Man say; I have been labouring for the Meat that perisheth; disquieting myself in vain, full of Projects for the World, and unwearied in my Endeavours to compass an earthly treasure? Yet therein I have either been check'd by Providence; or, if I have obtained, yet I am no sooner come to enjoy that Comfort I promised myself in it, but I am ready to leave it all, to be strip'd of it by Death, and in that Day all my Thoughts perish. But in the mean Time, what have I done for my Soul? When did I ever break a Night's Sleep, or deny myself for it? Ah Fool that I am? to nourish and pamper a vile Body, which must shortly lie under the Clods, and become a loathsome Carcass; and, in the mean Time, neglect and undo my poor Soul, which partakes of the Nature of Angels, and must live for ever: I have kept others Vineyards, but mine own I have not kept; I have been a Drudge and Slave to the World: In a worse Condition hath my Soul been, than others that are condemned to the Mines. LORD change my Treasure, and change my Heart! O let it suffice that I have been thus long labouring in the Fire, for very Vanity. Now gather up my Heart and Affections in thyself, and let my great Design now be, to secure a special Interest in thy blessed Self, that I may once say, *To me to live is Christ.*





\*\*\*\*\*

C H A P   X I I I .

O B S E R V A T I O N .

**T**H E R E are Multitudes of living Creatures in the Sea. When GOD blessed the Waters, He said, Let the Waters bring forth abundantly, both Fish and Fowl, that move in it, and fly about it. Yet all those Multitudes of Fish and Fowl, both in Sea and Land, are cared and provided for. *Thou givest them their Meat in due Season; Thou openest thy Hand, and satisfiest the Desire of every living Thing.*

A P P L I C A T I O N .

If GOD takes Care for the Fishes of the Sea, and the Fowls of the Air, much more will He care and provide for those that fear Him. *When the Poor and Needy seek Water, and there is none, and their Tongue faileth for Thirst; I the LORD will hear them, I the GOD of Israel will not forsake them, Isa. xli. 17 Take no Thought for your Life, (saith the LORD) what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; or for the Body, what ye shall put on. Which He backs with an Argument from GOD's Providence over the Creatures. GOD would have his People be without Carefulness (i. e.) anxious Care, And to cast their Care upon Him, for He careth for them. There be two main Arguments suggested in the Gospel, to quiet and satisfy our Hearts in this Particular: The one is, That the Gift of Jesus Christ amounts*

to more than all those Things come to; yea, in bestowing Him, He has given that which eminently comprehends all those inferior Mercies in it, *Rom. viii. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all Things?* And, *1 Cor. iii. 22. All Things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is GOD's.* Another Argument is, That GOD gives these temporal Things to those He never gave *Christ* unto, and therefore there is no great Matter in them: Yea, to those, which in a little while, are to be thrust into Hell, *Psal. xvii. 14.* Now, if GOD cloath and feed his Enemies, if (to alude to that, *Luke xii. 28.*) He cloath this Grass, which To-day is in its Pride and Glory in the Field, and To-morrow is cast into the Oven, into Hell; how much more will He cloath and provide for you that fear Him?

THIS GOD that feeds all the Creatures, is your Father, and a Father that never dies; and therefore you shall not be as exposed Orphans, that are the Children of such a Father. For *He hath said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you, Heb. xiii. 3.* I have read of a good Woman, that in all Wants and Distresses, was wont to encourage herself with that Word, *The LORD liveth.* But one Time being in deep Distress, and forgetting that Consolation, one of her little Children came to her, and said, *Mother, why weep you so? is GOD dead?* Which Words from a Child, shamed her out of her unbelieving Fears. And brought her Spirit to Rest.

How sweet a Life might Christians live, could they but bring their Hearts to a full Subjection to the Will of GOD! To be content not only with what He commands and approves, but also with  
what

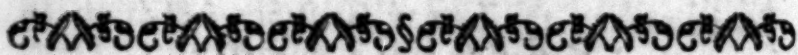
what He allots and appoints. It was a sweet Reply, that a Woman once made upon her Death-bed, to a Friend that asked her, *Whether she was more willing to live or die?* She answered, *I am pleased with what GOD pleaseth.* Yea, said her Friend, *but if GOD should refer it to you, which would you chuse?* Truly, saith she, *If GOD should refer it to me, I would refer it to Him again.* Ah blest Life! when the Will is swallowed up in the Will of GOD, and the Heart at rest in his Care and Love, and pleased with all his Appointments.

### REFLECTION.

I REMEMBER my Fault this Day may many a Soul say. Ah how faithless and distrustful have I been, notwithstanding the great Security GOD hath given to my Faith, both in his Word and Works! O my Soul, thou hast greatly sinned therein, and dishonoured thy Father! I have been worse to my Father, than my Children are to me. They trouble not their Thoughts with what they shall eat or drink, or put on, but trust to my Care and Provision for that: Yet I cannot trust my Father, tho' I have ten thousand Times more Reason so to do, than they have to trust me. Surely, unless I were jealous of my Father's Affection, I could not be so dubious of his Provision for me. I should rather wonder that I have so much, than repine I have no more. I should rather have been troubled that I have done no more for GOD, than that I have received no more from GOD. I have not proclaimed it to the World by my Conversation, that I have found a Sufficiency in Him alone. How have I debased the Faithfulness and All-sufficiency of GOD, and magnified these earthly Trifles by my Anxiety about them? Had I had more Faith, a light Purse would not have made such a heavy Heart. LORD,



how often hast Thou convinced me of this Folly, and put me to the Blush, when Thou hast confuted my Unbelief; so that I have resolved never to distrust Thee more, and yet new Exigencies renew this Corruption? How contradictory also have my Heart and my Prayers been? I pray for them conditionally, and with Submission to thy Will; I dare not say to Thee, I must have them; yet this hath been the Language of my Heart and Life. O convince me of this Folly!



## C H A P. XIV.

### O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE Waters of the Sea in themselves, are brackish and unpleasant, yet being exhaled by the Sun, and condensed into Clouds, they fall down into pleasant showers; or, if drained thro' the Earth, their Property is thereby altered; and that which was so salt in the Sea, becomes exceeding sweet and pleasant in the Springs.

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

**AFFLICTIONS** in themselves are evil, very bitter and unpleasant. Yet not intrinsically evil, as Sin is; for if so, the Holy God would never own it for His own Act, as He doth, *Mic. iii. 2.* But it is evil, as it is the Fruit of Sin, and grievous unto Sense. But though it be thus brackish and unpleasant in itself, yet passing through *Christ*, it loses that

that ungrateful Property, and becomes pleasant in the Fruits thereof unto Believers.

YEA, such are the blessed Fruits thereof, that they are to account it all Joy, when they fall into divers Afflictions, *Jam. i. 2.* David could bless GOD, that He was afflicted; and many have done the like. A good Woman once compared her Afflictions to her Children; (saith she) *They put me in Pain in bearing them; yet as I know not which Child, so neither which Affliction I could be without.*

SOMETIMES the LORD sanctifies Affliction to discover the Corruption that is in the Heart, *Deut. viii. 2.* It is a Furnace to shew the Dross. When a sharp Affliction comes, then the Pride, Impatience, and Unbelief of the Heart appear. When the Water is stirred, then the Mud and Sediment that lay at the Bottom rise. Little (saith the afflicted Soul) did I think, there had been in me that Pride, Self-love, Distrust of GOD, carnal Fear, and Unbelief, as I now find. O where is my Patience, my Faith, my Glory in Tribulation? Now what a blessed Thing is this, to have the Heart thus discovered?

AGAIN: Sanctified Afflictions discover the Emptiness of the Creature. Now the LORD hath stained its Pride, and veiled its tempting Splendor, by this or that Affliction; and the Soul sees what a shallow deceitful Thing it is. The World (as one hath truly observed) is then only great in our Eyes, when we are full of Sense: But Affliction makes us more spiritual, and then it is Nothing. It drives us nearer to GOD, makes us see the Necessity of the Life of Faith, with Multitudes of other Benefits.

BUT

BUT yet these sweet Fruits of Affliction do not naturally spring from it: No, we may as well look for Grapes from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles, as for such Fruits from Affliction, till *Christ's* sanctifying Hand and Art have past upon them.

THE Reason why they become thus sweet and pleasant is, because they run now into another Channel; *Jesus Christ* hath removed them from Mount *Ebal* to *Gerizim*; they are no more the Effects of vindictive Wrath, but paternal Chastisement, (and as one well notes) *A teaching Affliction is the Result of all the Offices of Jesus Christ.* As a King, He chastens; as a Prophet, He teacheth, viz. by chastening; and as a Priest, He hath purchased this Grace of the Father, that the dry Rod might blossom, and bear Fruit. Behold then, a sanctified Affliction is a Cup, whereinto *Jesus Christ* hath wrung and press'd the Juice and Virtue of all his mediatory Offices. Surely, that must be a Cup of generous Wine, a Cup of Blessing to the People of God.

### REFLECTION.

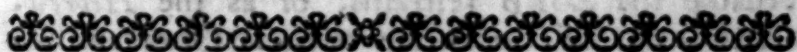
HENCE may the unsanctified Soul reflect upon itself; O my Soul, what Good hast thou gotten by all, or any of thy Afflictions; God's Rod hath been dumb to thee, or thou deaf to it. I have not learned one holy Instruction from it. My Troubles have left me the same, or worse than they found me; my Heart was proud, earthly and vain before, and so it remains still: They have not purged out, but only given Vent to the Pride, and Atheism of my Heart. I have been in my Afflictions, as *Abar* was in his, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 22. who in the *Midd* of his Distress, yet trespassed more and more against the LORD. When I have been in Storms at Sea, or Troubles at Home, my Soul within me hath been



been as a raging Sea. Surely this Rod is not the Rod of GOD's Children. I have proved but Dross in the Furnace, and I fear the LORD will put me away as Dross, as He threatens to do the Wicked.

HENCE also should holy Souls draw much Encouragement amidst all their Troubles. These are the Fruits of GOD's fatherly Love to me! Why should I fear in the Day of Evil? or tremble any more at Affliction? Tho' they seem as a Serpent at a Distance, yet are they a Rod in Hand. Blessed be that skilful and gracious Hand, that makes the Rod, the dry Rod to blossom, and bear such precious Fruit.

LORD! what a Mystery of Love lies in this Dispensation! That Sin which first brought Afflictions into the World, is now itself carried out of the World by Affliction. O what can frustrate my Salvation, when those very Things that seem most to oppose it, are made subservient to it; and contrary to their own Nature promote and further it!



## CHAP. XV.

### OBSERVATION.

**I**T is a wonderful Work of GOD, to bound such a vast and furious Creature, as the Sea; which, according to the Judgment of many learned Men, is higher than the Earth; and that it hath a Propension to overflow it, is evident, both from its Nature and Motion; were it not, that the great  
GOD

## 286 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

GOD had laid his Law upon it. And this a Work wherein the LORD glories, *Psalms civ. 9. Thou hast set a Bound, that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the Earth.* Which it is clear they would do, were they not thus limited. So *Job xxxviii. 8, 10, 11. Who shut up the Seas with Doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the Womb? I brake up for it my decreed Place, and set Bars and Doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud Waves be staid.*

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

AND no less is the glorious Power and Mercy of GOD discovered in bridling the Rage of Satan and his Instruments, that they break not in upon the Inheritance of the LORD and destroy it. Surely, *the Wrath of Man shall praise Thee, and the Remainder of Wrath thou shalt restrain, Psal. lxxvi. 10.* By which it is more than hinted, that there is a World of Rage and Malice in the Hearts of wicked Men, which fain would, but cannot vent itself, because the LORD restrains, or as the Hebrew, *Girds it up.* Satan is the envious One, and his Rage is great against the People of GOD, *Rev. xii. 12.* But GOD holds him and all his Instruments in a Chain; and it is well for GOD's People, that it is so.

THEY are limited as the Sea, and so the LORD in a providential Way speaks to them, *Hitherto shall you go, and no further.* Sometimes He ties them up so short, that they cannot touch his People, though they have the greatest Opportunities and Advantages, *Psalms cv. 12, 13, 14, 15. When they were but a few Men in Number, yea, very few, and Strangers; when they went from one Nation to another;*

another; from one Kingdom to another People: He suffered no Man to do them Wrong; yea, He reprov'd Kings for their Sakes, saying, Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no Harm. And sometimes He permits them to trouble his People, but then sets Bounds to them, beyond which they must not pass. *Rev. ii. 10. Behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that you may be tried, and ye shall have Tribulation ten Days.*

HERE are four remarkable Limitations upon Satan and his Agents, in Reference to the People of GOD: A Limitation as to the *Persons*, not all, but some: A Limitation of the *Punishment*, a Prison, not a Grave, not Hell: A Limitation upon them as to the *End*, for Trial, not Ruin: And lastly, as to the *Duration*, not as long as they please, but ten Days.

### REFLECTION.

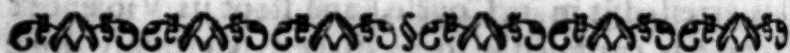
O MY Soul, what Comfort and Consolation mayst thou suck from the Breast of this Truth; in the darkest Day of Trouble? Thou seest how the flowing Sea drives to overwhelm the Earth: Who has arrested it in its Course, and stopt its Violence? Who has confined it to its Place? Certainly none other but the LORD. When I see it threaten the Shore with its proud, furious and insulting Waves, I wonder it doth not swallow up all; but I see it no sooner touch the Sands, which GOD hath made its Bounds, but it retires, and as it were with Submission, respects those Limits which GOD hath set it.

THUS the fiercest Element is repressed by the feeblest Thing: Thou seest also, how full of Wrath and Fury wicked Men are, how they rage  
like



## 288 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

like the troubled Sea, and threaten to overwhelm thee, and all the LORD's Inheritance: And then the Floods of ungodly Men make thee afraid, yet are they restrained by an invisible Hand, that they cannot execute their Purpose, nor perform their Enterprize. How full of Devils and devilized Men, is this lower World? Yet in the Midst of them all, hast thou hitherto been preserved. O my Soul, admire and adore that glorious Power of God, by which thou art kept unto Salvation. Is not the Preservation of us in the Midst of such Hosts of Enemies, as great a Miracle, though not so sensible, as the Preservation of those three *Jews* in the Midst of the fiery Furnace? For there is as strong a Propension in *Satan*, and wicked Men, to destroy us, as in the Fire to burn. O then let me chearfully address myself to the faithful Discharge of my Duty, and stand no longer in a slavish Fear of Creatures, who can have no Power against me, but what is given them from above, *John* xix. 11. And no more shall be given than shall turn to the Glory of God, *Psalms* lxxvi. 10. and the Advantage of my Soul, *Rom.* viii. 28.



### C H A P. XVI.

#### O B S E R V A T I O N.

**O**F how great Use and Necessity is the Compass to Seamen? Though they can coast a little Way, yet they dare not venture far into the Ocean without. It directs and shapes their Course for them: And if by the Violence of Wind and Weather

ther they be driven beside their due Course, yet by the Help of this they are brought to Rights again. It is wonderful to consider, how by the Help of this Guide they can run in a direct Line many hundred Leagues, and at last fall right with the smallest Island; which is in the Ocean, comparatively, but as the Head of a small Pin upon a Table.

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

WHAT the Compass, and all other Instruments are to the Navigator, that and much more is the Word of GOD to us in our Course to Heaven. This is our Compass to steer our Course by, and it is truly touched; he that orders his Conversation by it, shall safely arrive in Heaven at last. *As many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy.*

THIS Word is as necessary to us in our Way to Glory, as a Lamp or Lanthorn in a dark Night. This is a *Light shining in a dark Place, 'till the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in our Hearts,* 2 Pet. i. 19. If any that profess to know it, and own it as a Rule, miss Heaven at last; let them not blame the Word for misguiding them, but their own negligent and deceitful Hearts, that shape not their Course to its Prescriptions.

WHAT Blame can you lay upon the Compass, if you steer not exactly by it? How many are there, that neglecting this Rule, will coast it to Heaven by their own Reason? No Wonder such fall short, and perish in the Way. This is a faithful Guide, and brings all that follow it to a blessed End. *Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me to Glory,* Psalm lxxiii. 24. The whole

VOL. XLIII.                      A a                      hundredth

hundredth and nineteenth Psalm in spent is Commendation of its transcendent Excellency and Usefulness. *Luther* professed, that he would not take the whole World in Exchange for one Leaf of it. Lay but this Rule before you, and walk accurately by it, and you cannot be out of your Way to Heaven.

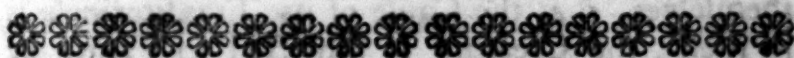
SOME, indeed, have opened their blasphemous Mouths against it; as *Julian*, that cursed Apostate, who feared not to say, There was as good Matter in *Phocillides*, as in *Solomon*. And the Papists generally slight it, making it a lame imperfect Rule; yea, making their own Traditions the Touchstone of Doctrines, and Foundation of Faith: They set up their Inventions above it. And thus do they make it void, or, as the Word signifies, *Matt.* xv. 6. unlord it, and take away its Authority as a Rule. But those that have thus slighted it, and follow Bye-paths, take not Hold of the Paths of Life. All other Lights to which Men pretend, in the Neglect of this, are but false Fires, that will lead Men into the Pit of Destruction.

### REFLECTION.

AND is thy Word a Compass, to direct my Course to Glory? O where am I then like to arrive at last, that in all my Course have neglected it, and steered according to the Counsel of my own Heart? LORD, I have not made thy Word the Man of my Counsel, but consulted with Flesh and Blood: I have not enquired at this Oracle, nor studied it, and made it the Guide of my Way; but walked after the Sight of my Eyes, and the Lust of my Heart. Whither, LORD, can I come at last, but to Hell, after this Way of Reckoning? Some have slighted thy Word professedly, and I have slighted it



it practically. I have a poor Soul embarked for Eternity; it is now floating on a dangerous Ocean, Rocks and Sands on every Side, and I go adrift before every Wind of Temptation, and know not where I am. Ah LORD, convince me of the Danger of this Condition. O convince me of my Ignorance in thy Word, and the fatal Consequence thereof. LORD, let me now resolve to study, prize, and to obey it; hide it in my Heart, that I may not sin against it. Open my Understanding, that I may understand the Scriptures: Open my Heart to entertain it in Love. O Thou that hast been so gracious as to give a perfect Rule, give me also a perfect Heart, to walk by that Rule to Glory!



## CHAP. XVII.

### OBSERVATION.

**T**HE Sea hath its alternate Course and Motion, its Ebbings and Flowings: No sooner is it High-water, but it begins to ebb again, and leave the Shore naked and dry, which but a little before it covered and overflowed. And as its Tide, so also its Waves are the Emblem of Inconstancy, still rolling this Way and that, never fixed and quiet. *Instabilis unda: As fickle as a Wave*, is common to a Proverb. See James i. 6. *He that wavereth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven with Winds, and tossed.*

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

THUS mutable and inconstant are all outward Things; there is no depending on them; Nothing of Substance, or any solid Consistence in them, 1 Cor. vii. 31. *The Fashion of this World passeth away.* It is an high Point of Folly to depend upon such Vanities, Prov. xxiii. 5. *Why wilt thou set, (or, as it is in the Hebrew) cause thine Eyes to fly upon that which is not? For Riches certainly make themselves Wings and fly away, as an Eagle toward Heaven.* “In flying to us (saith Augustine) they have *alas vix quidem passerinas*, scarce a Sparrow’s Wings; but in flying from us, Wings as an Eagle.” And those Wings they are said to make to themselves, *i. e.* the Cause of its Transitoriness is in itself; the Creature is subjected to Vanity by Sin; they are sweet Flowers, but withered presently, James i. 10. *As the Flower of the Grass, so shall the rich Man fade away.* The Man is like the Stalk or Grass, his Riches are the Flower of the Grass, his Glory and outward Beauty; the Stalk is soon withered, but the Flower much sooner. This is either withered upon, or blown off from it, while the Stalk abides. Many a Man outlives his Estate and Honour, and stands in the World as a bare dry Stalk in the Field, whose Flower, Beauty and Bravery is gone; one Puff of Wind blows it away, one churlish easterly Blast shrivels it up.

How mad a Thing is it then, for any Man to be lifted up in Pride, upon such a Vanity as this is; to build so lofty a Roof upon such a feeble, tottering Foundation? We have seen Meadows full of Flowers, mown down and withered, Men of great Estates impoverished suddenly: And when, like a Meadow that is mown, they have begun to recover

ver themselves again, (as the Phrase is) the LORD hath sent *Grashoppers* in the Beginning of the Shooting up of the latter Growth, Amos vii. 1. Just as the Grashoppers and other Creatures devour the second tender Herbage, as soon as the Field begins to recover its Verdure; so Men, after they have been blasted by Providence, begin after a While to flourish again, but then comes some new Affliction and blasts all. None have more frequent Experience of this, than you that are Merchants and Seamen, whose Estates are floating: And yet such as have had the highest Security in the Eye of Reason, have, notwithstanding, experienced the Vanity of these Things. Gallimer, King of the *Vandals*, was brought so low, that he sent to his Friend for a Sponge, a Loaf of Bread, and an Harp; a Sponge to dry up his Tears, a Loaf of Bread to maintain his Life, and an Harp to solace himself in his Misery. *Bellisarius* was a Man famous in his Time, General of an Army; yet having his Eyes put out, and stript of all earthly Comforts, was led about, crying, *Date obolum Bellisario*, Give one Penny to poor *Bellisarius*. Instances in History of this Kind are infinite. Men of the greatest Estates and Honours, have nevertheless become the very *Ludibria Fortunæ*, as one speaks, The very Scorn of Fortune.

YEA, and not only wicked Men, that have gotten their Estates by Rapine and Oppression, have lived to see them thus scattered by Providence; but sometimes good Men have had their Estates, how justly soever acquired, scattered by Providence also. Who ever had an Estate better gotten, or better managed, than *Job*? Yet all was overthrown and swept away in a Moment, though in Mercy to him, as the Issue demonstrated.



O THEN, what a Vanity is it to set the Heart, and let out the Affections on them? You can never depend too much upon GOD, nor too little upon the Creature. *1 Tim. vi. 17. Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high minded, and trust in uncertain Riches.*

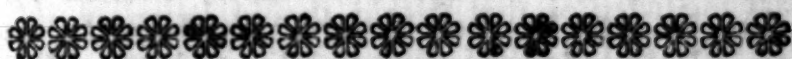
### R E F L E C T I O N.

ARE all earthly Things thus transitory and vain? Then what a Reproach and Shame is it to me, that the Men of this World should be more industrious in the Prosecution of such Vanities, than I am to enrich my Soul with everlasting Treasure? O my Soul, thou dost not lay out thy Strength and Earnestness for Heaven, with any Proportion to what they do for the World. I have indeed higher Motives, and a surer Reward than they: But as I have an Advantage above them herein, so have they an Advantage above me in the Strength and Entireness of the Principle by which they are acted. What they do for the World, they do with all their Might; they have no contrary Principle to oppose them; their Thoughts, Strength, and Affection, is entirely carried in one Channel: But I must strive through a thousand Difficulties and Contradictions. O my God, shall not my Heart be more enlarged in Zeal, Love, and Delight in Thee, than theirs are after their Lusts? O let me once find it so!

AGAIN, is the Creature so vain and unstable, then why are my Affections so eager after it? And why am I so apt to dote upon its Beauty, especially when GOD is staining all its Pride and Glory!

O that my Spirit were raised above them, and my Conversation more in Heaven! O that like that  
Angel,

Angel, Rev. x. 1, 2. which came down from Heaven, and set one Foot upon the Sea, and another upon the Earth, having a Crown upon his Head, so I might set one Foot upon all the Cares, Fears and Terrors of the World, and another upon all the tempting Glory of the World; treading both under Foot in the Dust, and crowning myself with Nothing but spiritual Excellencies and Glory.



## C H A P. XVIII.

### O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE Waves of the Sea are sometimes raised by God's Commission, to be Executioners of his Threatnings upon Sinners. When *Jonah* fled from the Presence of the LORD to *Tarshish*, the Text saith, *The LORD sent out a great Wind into the Sea, and there was a mighty Tempest, so that the Ship was like to be broken*, *Jonah i. 4.* These were GOD's Bailiffs, to arrest the Run-away Prophet. And *Psalms cxlviii. 8.* the stormy Winds are said to *fulfil his Word*; not only his Command, in rising when GOD bids them, but his Word of Threatning also. And hence it is called a *destroying Wind*, *Jer. li. 1.* and a *stormy Wind in GOD's Fury*, *Ezek. xiii. 13.*

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

IF these be the Executioners of the LORD's Threatnings, how sad then is their Condition that  
put

put to Sea under the Guilt of their Sins? If God should commission the Winds to go after and arrest thee for all thou owest Him, where art thou then? How dare you put forth under a Divine Threat, before all be cleared betwixt God and thee? Sins in Scripture are called Debts, *Matt. vi. 12.* They are Debts to God; not that we owe them to Him, or ought to sin, but because they render the Sinner obnoxious to God's Judgments. All Sinners must undergo the Curse, either in their own Person, according to the Letter of the Law, *Gen. ii. 17. Gal. iii. 10.* or their Surety, according to the tacit Intent of the Law manifested to be the Mind of the Law-giver, *Gen. iii. 15. Gal. iii. 13, 14.*

Now, he that by Faith hath Interest in his Surety, hath his Discharge sealed in the Blood of *Christ*: But if thou be an impenitent Sinner, thy Debt remains upon thine own Score: *And be sure thy Sin will find thee out, wherever thou goest,* *Numb. xxxii. 23. i. e.* God's revenging Hand for Sin will be upon thee: Thou mayst lose the Sight of thy Sins, but they lose not the Sight of thee; they follow after, as the Hound doth the fleeting Game upon the Scent, 'till they have fetched thee up: And then consider, *how fearful a Thing it is to fall into the Hands of the living God.* How soon may a Storm arrest, and bring thee before the Bar of God?

### R E F L E C T I O N.

O MY Soul, what a Case art thou in, if this be so? Are not all thy Sins yet upon thine own Score? Hast thou not made light of *Christ*, and that precious Blood of His, and hitherto persisted in thy Rebellion against Him? And what can the Issue of this be, but Ruin? There is abundant Mercy indeed



deed for returning Sinners ; but the Gospel speaks of none for impenitent Sinners. And though many who are going on in their Sins are overtaken by Grace, yet there is no Grace promised to such as go on in Sin. If GOD should arrest me by the next Storm, and call me to an Account for all that I owe him, I must then lie in the Prison of Hell to all Eternity ; for I can never pay the Debt: Nay, all the Angels in Heaven cannot satisfy for it: Being *Christless*, I am under all the Curses in the Book of GOD. LORD, pity and spare me a little longer ! O discover thy *Christ* unto me, and give me Faith in his Blood, and then Thou art fully satisfied, and I discharged, at once. O require not the Debt at my Hand, for then Thou wilt never be satisfied, nor I acquitted. What Profit, LORD, is there in my Blood ! O my Soul, make Haste to *Christ*, thy City of Refuge ; thou knowest not how soon the Avenger of Blood may overtake thee.



## CH A P. XIX.

### OBSERVATION.

**I**N Storms the richest Commodities are cast overboard ; they stand not upon it, when Life and all is in Hazard, *Jonah* i. 5. The Mariners cast forth the Wares that were in the Ship into the Sea, to lighten it. How highly soever Men prize such Commodities, yet Reason tells them, it were better those should perish, than Life. *Satan* himself

## 293 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

self could say, *Skin for Skin, and all that a Man hath will he give for his Life.*

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

AND surely, it is every Way as highly reasonable, that Men should cast out and cut off their dearest Lusts, rather than their immortal Souls sink and perish in the Storm of GOD's Wrath. Life, indeed, is a precious Treasure, and highly valued by Men: *A living Dog is better than a dead Lion.* And we find Men willing to part with their Estates, Limbs, or any outward Comfort, for the Preservation of it. The Woman in the Gospel spent all she had on the Physicians for her Health, a Degree below Life.

SOME indeed much over-value their Lives, and part with *Christ* and Peace of Conscience for it; but he that thus saves it, shall lose it. Now, if Life be so much worth, what then is the Soul worth?

LIFE is more worth than all the World, but my Soul is more worth than ten thousand Lives. Nature teacheth you to value the first so high, and Grace should teach you to value the second much higher. Now here is the Case: Either you must part with your Sins, or with your Souls; if these be not cast out, both must sink together. God saith to you in this Case, as to *Ahab*, when he spared *Benhadad*, 1 Kings xx. 42. *Because thou hast let go a Man, which GOD hath appointed to Destruction, therefore thy Life shall go for his Life.* Guilt will raise a Storm of Wrath, as *Jonah* did, if not cast out.

REFLEC

R E F L E C T I O N.

AND must Sin or the Soul perish? Must my Life, yea, my eternal Life go for it, if I spare it? O then let me not be cruel to mine own Soul, in sparing my Sin. O my Soul, this foolish Indulgence will be thy Ruin: If I spare it, GOD hath said, *He will not spare me*, Deut. xxvi. 20.

IT is true, the Pains of Mortification are sharp, but yet easier than the Pains of Hell: To cut off a Right Hand, or pluck out a Right Eye, is hard; but to have my Soul cut off eternally from GOD, is harder. Is it as easy, O my Soul, to burn for them in Hell, as to mortify them on Earth? Surely, it is *profitable for me, that one Member perish, rather than that ail be cast into Hell*.

I SEE the Merchant willing to part with rich Wares, if embarked with them in a Storm: And those that have gangreen'd Legs or Arms, willingly stretch them out to be cut off, to preserve Life: And shall I be willing to endure no Difficulties for my Soul? *Christ* reckon'd Souls worth his Blood; and is it not worth my Self-denial? LORD, let me not warm a Snake in my Bosom, that will at last sting me to the Heart.







## C H A P. XX.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**W**HEN the Sea works and is tempestuous, it is not in the Power of any Creature to appease it. When the *Ægyptians* would express an Impossibility, they did it by the Picture of a Man treading upon the Waves. It is storied of *Canute*, an ancient *Danish* King, that when a mighty Storm of Flattery arose upon him, he appeased it by shewing that he could not appease the Sea: One of his Courtiers told him, as he rode near the Seaside, *That he was Lord of the Sea, as well as Land.* Well, said the King, *we shall see that by and by:* And so went to the Water-side, and with a loud Voice cried, *O ye Sea and Waves, come no farther, touch not my Feet.* But the Sea came up, notwithstanding that Charge, and confuted the Flattery. But *Jesus Christ* hath the Command of them indeed: It is said of Him, *Matt. viii. 26. That He rebuked them:* And, *Mark iv. 38.* He quiets them with a Word, *Peace, be still:* As one would hush a Child, and it obeyed Him.

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

CONSCIENCE, when awakened by the Terrors of the LORD, is like a raging tempestuous Sea; so it works, so it roars; and it is not in the Power of

of all the Creatures to quiet it. Spiritual Terrors, as well as spiritual Consolations, are not known 'till felt. When the Arrows of the Almighty are shot into the Spirit, and the Terrors of God set themselves in Array against the Soul; when the Venom of those Arrows drink up the Spirits, and those Armies of Terrors charge violently up it, as *Job vi. 4.* what Creature then is able to stand before them! Even God's own Children have felt such Terrors as have *distracted them*, *Pf. lxxxix. 51.* Conscience is the Seat of Guilt. It is like a Burning-Glass, it contracts the Beams of the Threatnings, twists them together, and reflects them on the Soul, untill it smoke, scorch, and flame. If the Wrath of a King be like the Roaring of a Lion, then what is the Almighty's Wrath! which is *burning Wrath*, *Job xix. 11.* *tearing Wrath*, *Pf. l. 22.* and *abiding Wrath*, *Job iii. 16.*

In this Case no Creature can relieve, *all are Physicians of no Value*; some under these Terrors have thought Hell more tolerable, and by a violent Hand have thrust themselves out of the World into it, to avoid these Gnawings: Yet *Jesus Christ* can quickly calm these Waves also, and hush them with a Word; yea, He is the Physician, and no other. It is the Sprinkling of his Blood which allays those Heats within: That Blood of Sprinkling speaks Peace, when all other have practised upon the Soul to no Purpose; and the Reason is, because He is a Person in whom God and Man, Justice and Mercy meet, and kiss each other. And hence Faith fetches in Peace to the Soul.

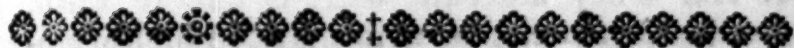
## R E F L E C T I O N.

CAN none appease a troubled Conscience but *Christ*? Then learn, O my Soul, daily more and more to favour that glorious Name, even *Jesus*, that delivers not only from the Wrath to come, but that which is felt here also. If the Foretaste of Hell be so intolerable, if a few Drops let fall on the Conscience in this Life, be so scalding and insufferable, what is it to have all the Vials poured out to Eternity, when there shall be nothing to divert or allay it.

HERE Men have somewhat to abate those Terrors, some Hopes of Mercy, at least a Possibility; but *there* is none. O my Soul! how art thou loaded with Guilt? And what wouldst thou be, should God rouse that sleepy Lion in thy Bosom! My Condition is not at all the better, because my Conscience is quiet: The Day is coming, when it must awake, and will lighten and thunder terribly within me, if I get not *Christ* first. O LORD, who knows the Power of thy Wrath? O let me not carry this Guilt out of the World with me, to maintain those everlasting Flames? Let me give no Sleep to mine Eyes, nor Slumber to my Eye-lids, 'till I feel the Comfort of that Blood of Sprinkling, which alone speaketh Peace.







C H A P. XXI.

O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE Providence of GOD in furnishing us with such Plenty of Fish, is not slightly to be passed over. We have not only several Sorts of Fish in our own Seas, which are caught in their Seasons; but from several Parts, especially the Western Parts of *England*, many Sail of Ships are sent yearly to the *American* Parts of the World: Whence every Year is brought Home, not only enough to supply our own Nation, but many thousand Pounds worth also yearly returned from *Spain*, and other Countries; by which Trade many thousand Families subsist.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

BUT what Return do we make to Heaven for these Mercies? What Notice is taken of the good Hand of Providence, which thus supplies and feeds us with the Blessings of the Sea; I fear there are but but few that own it, and are careful to make Return accordingly. Men do not consider, that *their Works are in the Hand of GOD*, Eccles. ix. 1. And even those that have the most immediate Dependence upon Providence, as Merchants and Seamen, yet are very prone to undertake Designs in the Confidence of their own Wisdom and Industry; not looking higher for the Blessing. They often *sacrifice to their own Net, and burn Incense to their Drag, because by them their*

## 304 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

*Portion is fat, and their Meat plenteous, Hab. i. 16. viz.* They attribute what is due to GOD, unto the Creature. Now this is a Sin highly provoking to the LORD : For look in what Degree the Heart cleaves to any other, in the same Degree it departs from the living GOD.

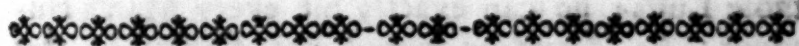
AND how do you think the blessed GOD will take it, to see Himself thus debased, and the Creature exalted into his Place ; to see you carry yourselves to the Creature as to a GOD, and to the blessed GOD as to a Creature. Surely, it is a great and common Evil, and such as will blast all, if not timely discovered and lamented. If we make Flesh our Arm, it is just with GOD to wither and dry up the Arm. Do we not, my Brethren, look upon second Causes, as if they had the main Stroke in our Business ? And pass by GOD, as if He came in but by the Bye ? But certainly, all Endeavours will be unsanctified, if not successful, in which GOD is not eyed.

*It is in vain for you to rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the Bread of Sorrows ; for so He giveth his beloved Sleep, Ps. cxxvii. 2. i. e.* It is to no Purpose for Men to beat their Brains, tire their Spirits, and rack their Consciences for an Estate. The true Way of acquiring and enjoying the Creature, is by submitting quietly to the Will of GOD, in a prudent and diligent, yet moderate Use of lawful Means ; Nothing can thrive with us 'till then.

### R E F L E C T I O N.

WHY then should I disquiet myself in vain, and rob myself of my Peace, by these unbelieving Cares and Distractions ? This hath been my Sin !  
I have

I have acted as if my Condition had been at my own Disposal; I have eyed Creatures and Means too much, and GOD too little. How have my Hands hanged down with Discouragement, when second Causes have disappeared, or wrought cross to my Designs, ready to transfer the Fault on this Thing, or that! And again, how apt am I to be vainly lifted up, when I see myself furnished with outward Provision? Oh, what a GOD-provoking Wickedness is this! How oft hath Providence checked my Presumption, and dashed many hopeful Projects? Yet have I not owned it, as I ought, and submitted to it. It is a Wonder this hath not closed the Hand of Providence against me, and pulled down a Curse upon all: Ah LORD, let me now learn to *acquaint myself with Thee*; then shall I decree a Thing, and it shall be established, Job xxii. 28.



C H A P. XXII.

O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**H E R E is Skill in Fishing: They that go to Sea on a Fishing Voyage, use to go provided with their Craft (as they fitly call it) without which they can do Nothing. They have their Lines, Hooks of several Sizes, and their Bait: They carefully observe their Seasons; when the Fish falls in, then they ply their Business Day and Night.



## A P P L I C A T I O N.

BUT how much more skilful and industrious is *Satan* to ensnare and destroy Souls? The Devil makes a Voyage as well as you ; he hath his Baits for you, as you for the Fish ; he hath his Devices and Wiles to catch Souls ; he is a Serpent, an old Serpent ; too crafty for Man in his Perfection, much more in his degenerate State, his Understanding being hurt by the Fall, and all his Faculties poisoned and perverted.

DIVINES observe four Steps or Degrees of *Satan's* tempting Power.

*First*, HE can find out the Constitution-evils of Men ; he knows to what Sin their Natures are more especially inclinable.

*Secondly*, HE can propound suitable Objects to those Lusts ; he can exactly hit every Man's Humour : As *Agrippina* mixed her Poison in that Meat her Husband loved best.

*Thirdly*, HE can cast Motions into the Mind, to close with those tempting Objects ; as it is said of *Judas*, John xiii. 2. *The Devil put it into his Heart.*

*Fourthly*, HE can sollicit, irritate, and provoke the Heart, and, by those restless Sollicitations, weary it ; and hereby he often draws Men to commit such Things as startled them in the first Motion.

ALL this he can do, if he find the Work stick and meet with Difficulties ; yet doth he not act to the utmost of his Skill and Power, at all Times and

and with all Persons; neither indeed need he so to do, the very propounding of an Object is enough to some without any further Sollicitation.

AND beside all this, his Policy much appears in the Choice of Place, Time, and Instruments to tempt by: And thus are poor Souls caught, as *Fishes in an evil Net*, Eccles. ix. 12. The carnal Man is led by Sense, as the Beast, and *Satan* handles and fits him accordingly. He useth all Sorts of Motives, not only internal, but external and sensitive also; as the Sparkling of the Wine, when it gives its Colour in the Glass: The Harlot's Beauty, whose Eye-lids are Snares, hiding always the Hook, and concealing the Issue from them. He promises them Gain and Profit, Pleasure and Delight, and all that is tempting, with Assurance of Secrecy. By these he fastens the fatal Hook in their Jaws, and thus they are led Captive at his Will.

### R E F L E C T I O N.

AND is *Satan* so subtle and industrious to entice Souls to Sin? Doth he thus cast out his golden Baits, and allure Souls with Pleasure to their Ruin? Then how doth it behove thee, O my Soul, to be jealous and wary! How strict a Guard should I set upon every Sense! Ah, let me not so much regard how Sin comes towards me in the Temptation, as how it goes off at last. The Day in which *Sodom* was destroyed, began with a pleasant Sun-shine, but ended with Fire and Brimstone.

I MAY promise myself much Content in the Satisfaction of my Lusts: But O, how certainly will it end in my Ruin! *Ahab*, doubtless, promised himself

himself much Content in the Vineyard of *Naboth*, but his Blood paid for it in the Portion of *Jezreel*. The Harlot's Bed was perfumed to entice the simple young Man, *Prov. vii. 17*. But those Chambers of Delight proved the Chambers of Death, and her House the Way to Hell. With what a smiling Face doth Sin come on towards me in the Temptations ! How doth it tickle the Fancy and please the deceived Heart ? But what a dreadful Upshot hath it ? The Delight is quickly gone, but the Guilt thereof remains to amaze and terrify the Soul with ghastly Forms, and dreadful Representations of the Wrath of God.

As Sin hath its Delights attending it to enter and fasten it, so it hath its Horrors and Stings to torment and wound : And as certainly as I see those go before it to make Way, so certainly shall I find these follow after, and tread upon its Heels. No sooner is the Conscience awakened, but all those Delights vanish as a Night-vision, or as a Dream when one awakes ; and then I shall cry, " Here is the Hook, but where is the Bait ? Here is the Guilt and Horror, but where the Delight that was promised ? And I, whither shall I now go ? Ah, my deceitful Lusts ? You have enticed and left me in the Midst of all Miseries."







C H A P. XXIII.

OBSERVATION.

**T**HERE are many sad Complaints abroad that Trade fails, nothing turns to Account. And though all Countries be open and free for Traffick, yet there seems to be a Dearth, a secret Curse upon Trading. You run from Country to Country, and come Losers Home. Men can hardly render a Reason of it; few hit the right Cause of this Judgment.

APPLICATION.

THAT Success in Trade is from the Blessing of GOD, I suppose few are so Atheistical, as to deny or question. The Devil himself acknowledges it, *Job i. 10. Thou hast blessed the Work of his Hands, and his Substance is increased in the Land.* It is not in the Power of any Man to get Riches, *Deut. viii. 18. Thou shalt remember the LORD thy GOD, for it is He that giveth thee Power to get Wealth.* It is his Blessing that makes good Men rich, and his Permission that makes wicked Men rich. The Maxim came from Hell: "Every Man is the Contriver of his own Condition." Certainly, *The Good of Man is not in his own Hand, Job xxi. 16. Promotion cometh not from the East or West, Psalm lxxvi. 6. 7.*

THIS

## 310 *A New Compass for Seamen:*

THIS being acknowledged, it is evident, that in all Disappointment, and Want of Success in our Callings, we ought not to stick in second Causes, but to look higher, even to the Hand of GOD: For, whose it is to give the Blessing, His also it is to with-hold it. And this is as clear in Scripture as the other. It is the LORD that takes away the Fishes of the Sea, *Hof. iv. 3. Zeph. i. 3.* It is He that *curseth our Blessings*, *Mal. ii. 2.*

THIS GOD doth as a Punishment for Sin, and the Abuse of Mercies: And therefore in such Cases, we ought not to rest in general Complaints of one another, but search what those Sins are that provoke the LORD to inflict such Judgments.

AND here I must request your Patience to bear a plain and close Word of Conviction. My Brethren, I am persuaded these are the Sins, among many other, that provoke the LORD to blast all your Employments.

1. OUR undertaking Designs without Prayer. Alas, how few of us begin with GOD? Interest Him in our Dealings, and ask Counsel and Direction at his Mouth. Prayer is that which sanctifies all Employments. The very Heathen could say, *A Jove Principium*, They must begin with GOD. O that we had more Prayers and fewer Oaths!

2. INJUSTICE and Fraud in our Dealings. A Sin to which Merchants are prone. This is that which will blast all our Enjoyments.

3. AN over-earnest Endeavour after the World. Men make this their Business, they will be rich: And hence it is, they are not only unmerciful to themselves, in wearing and wasting their own Spirits,

Spirits, with carking Cares, but to such also as they employ ; neither regarding the Souls nor Bodies of Men : Scarce affording them the Liberty of the LORD's Day, (as hath been too common in our *New-found-land* Employments ; ) or if they have it, yet they are so worn out with incessant Labours, that that precious Time is spent either in Sleep or Idleness. It is no Wonder GOD gives you more Rest than you would have, since that Day of Rest hath been no better improved. This Over-doing hath not been the least Cause of our Undoing.

*Lastly*, OUR Abuse of Prosperity, when GOD gave it ; making GOD's Mercies the Food and Fuel of our Lusts. When we had an Affluence of outward Blessings, this made us *kick against* GOD : Yea, grow proud of our Strength and Riches. How few of us in the Days of our Prosperity, behave our selves as good *Jehosaphat* did ? 2 Chron. xvii. 5, 6. *He had Silver and Gold in Abundance, and his Heart was lifted in the Way of GOD's Commandments ; not in Pride and Insolence.*

### REFLECTION.

ARE these the Sins that blast our Blessings, and wither our Mercies ? O then let me cease to wonder it is no better, and rather admire that it is no worse with me ; that my Neglect of Prayer, Injustice in Dealings, Earthly-mindedness, and Abuse of former Mercies, have not provoked GOD to strip me naked of all my Enjoyments. Let me humbly accept from the LORD the Punishment of my Iniquities, and lay my Hand upon my Mouth. And O that these Disappointments might convince me of the Creatures Vanity, and cause me to drive on another Trade for Heaven ; then shall I  
adore



adore thy Wisdom in rending from me those idolized Enjoyments. Ah LORD, when I had them, my Heart was a perpetual Drudge to them. How did I then forget GOD, neglect Duty, and not mind my eternal Concern ! If these had not perished, in all Probability I had perished. My GOD, let my Soul prosper, and then a small Portion of these Things shall afford me more Comfort than ever I had in their greatest Abundance. *A little that a righteous Man hath, is better than the Riches of many wicked.*



## C H A P. XXIV.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HERE are Fishes of Prey in the Sea, as well as Birds and Beasts of Prey on the Land. Our Seamen tell us, how the devouring Whales, Sharks, and other Fishes, follow smaller Fish, and devour Multitudes of them. It is frequent with us, in our own Seas, to find several smaller Fishes in the Bellies of the greater ones ; yea, I have often heard Seamen say, That the poor little Fry, when pursued, are so sensible of the Danger, that they have sometimes seen Multitudes of them cast themselves upon the Shore, and perish there, to avoid the Danger of being devoured.

THUS

APPLICATION.

THUS cruel, merciless, and oppressive are wicked Men, whose *tender Mercies are Cruelty*, Prov. xxii. 10. We see the like Cruelty in our Extortioners, and over-reaching Sharks ashore, who grind the Faces of the Poor, and regard not the Cries of the Fatherless and Widows, but fill their Houses with the Gain of Oppression. These are, by the Holy Ghost, compared to the Fishes of the Sea, *Hab. i. 13, 14.* This is a crying Sin, yea, it sends up a loud cry to Heaven for Vengeance, *Exod. xxii. 23.* *If thou afflict the Widow and the Fatherless, and they cry unto Me, I will surely hear their Cry.* Nay, GOD will not only hear their Cry, but avenge their Quarrel. That is a remarkable Text, *1 Thes. iv. 6.* *That no Man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any Matter, because the LORD is the [Avenger] of all such,* This Word, *ixdix*, *Avenger*, is but once more used in the *New-Testament*, *Rom. xiii. 4.* And there it is apply'd to the Civil Magistrate, who is to see Execution done upon Offenders. But this is a Sin that sometimes may be out of the Reach of Man's Justice, and therefore GOD himself will be their Avenger. You may over-power the Poor in this World, and it may be they cannot contend with you at Man's Bar, therefore GOD will bring it before his Bar.

It is a Sin so provoking to GOD, that He will not let it escape without severe Punishment sooner or later. The Prophet *Habakkuk*, Chap. i. ver. 13. wondered how the holy GOD could forbear such 'till the general Day of Reckoning, and that He did not take exemplary Vengeance on them in this Life. *Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and canst not look upon Iniquity: Wherefore*  
 VOL. XLIII. C c then

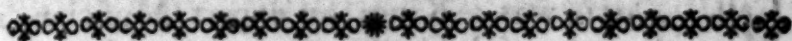
*then lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy Tongue when the Wicked devours the Man that is more righteous than he? And, Prov. xxiii. 10, 11. Enter not into the Fields of the Fatherleſs, i. e. Of the poor and helpleſs. But why is it more dangerous violently to invade their Right, than anothers? The Reason is added, For their Redeemer is mighty, and He ſhall plead their Cauſe with thee. It may be they are not able to retain a Counſel to plead their Cauſe here; therefore GOD will plead their Cauſe for them.*

### R E F L E C T I O N.

TURN in upon thy ſelf (O my Soul) and conſider, Haſt thou not been guilty of this crying Sin? Have I not (when a Servant) over-reached and defrauded others, and filled my Maſter's Houſe with Violence and Deceit? And ſo brought myſelf under that dreadful Threatning, *Zeph. i. 9.* Or ſince I came to trade and deal upon mine own Account, have not the Ballances of Deceit been in my Hand? I have (it may be) kept many in my Service and Employment; have not I uſed their Labours without Reward, and ſo am under that Woe? *Jer. xxii. 13.* Or not given them Wages proportionable to their Work? *Iſa. lviii. 3.* Or by bad Payment, and unjuſt Deductions defrauded them of a Part of their Due? *Mal. iii. 5.* Or at leaſt, delayed Payment, out of a covetous Diſpoſition to gain by it; whiſt their Neceſſities in the mean Time cried aloud for it; and ſo ſinned againſt GOD's expreſs Commands, *Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Levit. xix. 30.* O my Soul, examine thy ſelf upon theſe Particulars: Reſt not quiet, until this Guilt be removed by the Application of the Blood of Sprinkling. Haſt not the LORD ſaid, *James ii. 13. That they ſhall have*



have Judgment without Mercy, that have shewed no Mercy? And is it not a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God, who hath said, He will take Vengeance for these Things?



## CHAP. XXV.

### OBSERVATION.

**I**N Storms at Sea, the wise Navigator will not spread much Sail; that is the Way to lose Masts and all; They use then to furl up the Sails, and lie a Hull, when not able to bear a Knot of Sail; or else to lie a Try, or scud before the Wind and Seas. It is no Time then to hoist up the Top-gallant, and shew their Bravery.

### APPLICATION.

**WHEN** the Judgments of GOD are abroad in the Earth, it is no Time then to make Mirth. It is a provoking Evil! And commonly GOD severely punishes it. Of all Persons, such speed worse in the common Calamity, *Amos vi. 1. Woe to them that are at Ease in Sion, that are not grieved for the Afflictions of Joseph, as ver. 4.* It may be (as one observes upon the Text) they did not laugh at him, but they did not condole with him. And what shall be their Punishment? See ver. 7. *Therefore now shall they go Captive, with the first that go Captive: GOD will begin with them first.* That is a terrible Text, *Isa. xxii. 12.* which should make the Heart of such as are guilty in this Kind to tremble: *In that Day did the LORD of Hosts call to Mourning, and to girding with Sackcloth; and behold, Joy and Gladness, slaying Oxen, killing Sheep, drinking Wine.* Well, what is the Issue of this? Surely, this Ini-

quity shall not be purged from you, 'till you die. O dreadful Word! Surely (my Brethren) Sympathy is a Debt we owe to *Christ* Mystical. Whatever our Constitution, or Condition be, yet when *GOD* calls for Mourning, we must hear and obey that Call. *David* was a King, an expert Musician, a Man of a chearful Constitution; yet who more sensible of the Evil of those Times, than he? Rivers of Water ran down his Eyes at the Consideration of them. *Melancthon* was so affected with the Miseries of the Church in his Days, that he seemed to take little or no Notice of the Death of his Child, whom he entirely loved.

### REFLECTION.

BLESS then, O my Soul! for thy Levity and Insensibility under *GOD*'s angry Dispensations. How many of the precious Sons and Daughters of *Sion*, lie in Tears abroad, while I have been nourishing my Heart, as in a Day of Slaughter? The Voice of *GOD* hath cried to the City, and Men of Understanding have heard its Voice, Mich. vi. 9. But I have been deaf to that Cry. How loth (my *GOD*) have I been to urge my sensual Heart to Acts of Sorrow and Mourning: Thou hast bid me weep with them that weep, but my vain Heart cannot comply with such Commands. Ah *LORD*! If I mourn not with *Sion*, neither shall I rejoyce with her.

O! were mine Eyes opened, and my Heart sensible and tender, I might see Cause enough to melt into Tears: And to lie weeping at the Feet of *Christ*. *LORD*, what Stupidity is this? Shall I laugh when Thou art angry, and thy Children weeping and trembling? Then I must justly fear, lest when they shall sing for Joy of Heart, I shall howl  
for

for Vexation of Spirit, Isa. lxxv. 13, 14. Surely, O my Soul! Such Laughter will be turned into Mourning, either here or hereafter.

C H A P. XXVI.

O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HE smallest Leak, if not timely discovered and stopt, is enough to sink a Ship of the greatest Burden: Therefore Seamen are wont frequently to try what Water is in the Hold; and if they find it fresh, and increasing upon them, they ply the Pump, and presently set the Carpenters to search for it and stop it; and 'till it be found, they cannot be quiet.

R E F L E C T I O N.

**W**HAT such a Leak is to a Ship, that is the smallest Sin neglected to the Soul; it is enough to ruin it eternally. For as the greatest Sin, discover'd, lamented, and forsaken by a Believer, cannot ruin him; so the least Sin indulged, covered and connived at, will certainly prove the Destruction of the Sinner. No Sin, though never so small, is tolerated by the pure and perfect Law of God, *Psa.* cxix. 99. The Command is exceeding broad; not as if it gave Men a Latitude to walk as they please, but broad, i. e. extending itself to all our Words, Thoughts, Actions, and Affections. Laying a Law upon them all; conniving at no Evil in any Man.



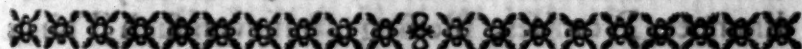
AND as the Word gives no Allowance for the least Sin, so it is the very Nature of Sincerity and Uprightness, to set the Heart against [every] Way of Wickedness. And especially against that Sin, which was its Darling in the Days of his Vanity. True Hatred (as the Philosopher observes) is of the whole Kind : He that hates Sin, as Sin, (and so doth every upright Soul) hates all Sins as well as some.

AGAIN, the Soul that hath had a saving Sight of *Jesus Christ*, a true Discovery of the Evil of Sin, in the Glass both of the Law and Gospel, can account no Sin small. He knows the Demerit of the smallest Sin is GOD's eternal Wrath, and that not the least Sin can be remitted, without the Application of the Blood of *Christ*, which Blood is of infinite Value.

#### REFLECTION.

AND is the smallest Sin not only damning in its own Nature, but the Ruin of that Soul that covers it? Then let my Spirit accomplish a diligent Search. Look to it, O my Soul! That no Sin be indulged by thee. Set these Considerations as so many flaming Swords in the Way of thy carnal Delights: Let me never say of any Sin, as *Lot* did of *Zoar*, *It is a little one, spare it.* Shall I spare that which cost the Blood of *Jesus Christ*? The LORD would not spare Him, *When He made his Soul an Offering for Sin.* Neither will He spare me, if I defend and hide it: If my Heart were right, that Lust whatever it be, that is so favoured by me, would especially be abhorred and hated. Whatever my Convictions and Reformations have been, yet if there be but one Sin retained and delighted in, this keeps the Devil's Interest still in my Soul: And tho' for a Time,

Time, he seem to depart, yet at last he will return with seven worse Spirits, and this Sin will open to him, and deliver up my Soul. LORD, let me make a thorough Work of it: Let me cut it off, and pluck it out, though it be as a Right Hand, or Eye. Shall I come so near the Kingdom of GOD, and make such a fair Offer for *Christ*, and yet stick at a small Matter, and lose all for Want of one Thing? LORD, let me shed the Blood of the dearest Sin, for his Sake that shed his dearest Blood for me.



## C H A P. XXVII.

### O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HOUGH in most Parts of the World the Winds are variable, and sometimes blow from every Point of the Compass, by Reason whereof, sailing is slow and dangerous; yet upon the Equinoctial, Seamen meet with a Trade-wind, blowing for the most Part one Way; and there they sail jocund before it, and scarce need to lower a Top-sail, for some Hundreds of Leagues.

### A P P L I C A T I O N.

ALTHOUGH the People of GOD meet with many seeming Rubs in their Way to Heaven, which are like contray Winds to a Ship; yet are they from the Day of their Conversion, to the Day of their compleat Salvation, never out of a Trade-wind's Way to Heaven, *Rom. viii. 21. We know that all Things*

*Things work together for Good, to them that love God.* This is a most precious Scripture, pregnant with Consolation to all Believers in all Conditions. Let us look a little nearer to it.

*(We know)* Mark the Certainty and Evidence of the Proposition, which is not built upon a Guess, but upon Knowledge. *We know it*, and that partly by divine Revelation, God has told us so; and partly by our own Experience, we find it so.

*(That all Things)* Not only Things that lie in a natural and direct Tendency to our Good; as Ordinances, Promises, Blessings, but even such Things as have no natural Fitness to such an End; as Afflictions, Temptations, Desertions. All these help onward: They

*(Work together)* Not all of them directly, and of their own Nature, but by being overruled to such an Issue by the gracious Hand of God: Nor yet do they work out such Good to us, singly and apart, but as adjuvant Causes or Helps, working in Subordination to the supreme Cause of our Happiness.

THE most seeming opposite Things, yea Sin itself, which in its own Nature is really opposite to their Good, yet eventually contributes to it. Afflictions and Desertions seem to work against us; but being once put into the Rank and Order of Causes, they work together with such blessed Instruments, as the Word and Prayer, to an happy Issue. And though the Face of these Things, that thus agree and work together, look contrary Ways; yet there be, as it were, secret Chains and Connections of Providence betwixt them, to unite them in their Issue. These may be many Instruments employ'd  
about



about one Work, and yet not communicate Counsels, or hold Intelligence with each other. *Joseph's* Brethren, the *Midianites*, *Potiphar*, knew not one another's Mind, nor aimed at one End, (much less the End that GOD brought about by them :) One acts out of Revenge, another for Gain, a third out of Policy, yet all meet together at last, in that Issue GOD had designed to bring about by them, even *Joseph's* Advancement. Even so it is here, Christian, there be more Instruments at Work for thine eternal Good, than thou art aware of.

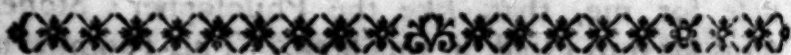
### REFLECTION.

CHEAR up then, O my Soul, and lean upon this Pillar of Comfort in all Distresses. Here is a Promise for me, that, like the Philosopher's Stone, turns all into Gold it toucheth. This Promise is my Security, however Things go in the World. My GOD *will do me no Hurt*, Jer. xxv. 6. Nay, He will do me Good by every Dispensation. *O that I had but an Heart to make all Things work for his Glory, that thus causeth every Thing for my Good.* My GOD, dost Thou turn every Thing to my Advantage? O let me return all to thy Praise; and if by every Thing Thou work my eternal Good, then let me in every Thing give Thanks.

BUT ah! how foolish and ignorant have I been? Even as a Beast before Thee. How hath my Heart been disquieted, at thy Dispensations, when they have crossed my Will! Not considering that my GOD faithfully pursues my Good, even in those Things that cross, as well as in that which pleases me.

WHAT a blessed Condition are all thy People in? All Things friendly and beneficial to them, Friends help-

helpful, Enemies helpful, every Thing conspiring and conducing to their Happiness. With others it is not so; Nothing works for their Good, nay, every Thing works against it: Their very Mercies are Snares, and their Prosperity destroys them; *Prov. i. 32.* Even the blessed Gospel itself is a Saviour of Death to them: When Evil befalls them, it is *an only Evil*, *Ezek. vii. 5.* that is, not turned into Good to them; and as their Evils are not turned into Good, so all their Good is turned into Evil. As this Promise hath an Influence upon all the Enjoyments of the Wicked. O my Soul, bless the LORD, who hath cast thy Lot into such a pleasant Place, and given thee such a glorious Heritage.



## C H A P. XXVIII.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**I**N fair Weather, when there is Sea-room enough, every common Person can guide the Ship, the Pilot may then lie down and take his Rest; but in great Storms and Strefs of Weather, or when near the dangerous Shoar, then the most skilful Pilot is put to it: Then he shews the utmost of his Art, and yet sometimes all is too little. They are at their Wits End, know not what to do more, but are forced to commit all to the Mercy of God and the Seas.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

IN the Storms of Affliction there are the most evident and full Discoveries of the Wisdom and Power of our God: It is indeed continually active for his People in all Conditions. Psal. cxxi. 4. *He that keepeth Israel, neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.* His People's Dangers are without Intermision, therefore his Preservations are so too. But, when they come into the Streights of deadly Dangers, which threaten like Rocks on every Side; the Wisdom of their God rides triumphantly and visibly upon the Waves of that stormy Sea. And this infinite Wisdom is then especially discovered in these Particulars.

1. IN leaving them still somewhat in the Room of those Comforts that they are deprived of; so that they see God doth exchange their Comforts, and that for the better; and this supports them. So *John xiv. 1, 2, 3.* *Christ's* bodily Presence is removed, but the Spirit was sent in the Room of it, which was better.

2. IN doubling their Strength, as He doubles their Burdens. It is observed, that Believers have many Times very strong and sweet Consolations, a little before their greatest Trials: And this is so ordinary, that when they have had extraordinary Consolations from God, they have then looked for some eminent Trial. The LORD appeared to *Abraham*, and sealed the Covenant to him, and then put him upon that great Trial of his Faith. So *Paul* had first his Revelations, then his Buffetings;

3. IN coming in so opportunely in the Time of their Distress, with Relief and Comfort, 1 *Pet. iv.*



## 324 *A New Compass for Seamen :*

14. *Then the Spirit of Glory, and of GOD resteth on them.* As that Martyr cried out to his Friend *Austin*, at the very Stake, *He is come, He is come.*

4. IN appointing and ordering the several Kinds of Afflictions, and allotting to every one, that very Affliction, and no other, which is most suitable to his Condition: Which Afflictions, like so many Potions of Physick, are prepared for that very malignant Humour that predominates in them. *Peter's* Sin was Self-confidence, GOD permits him to fall by denying *Christ*: Which doubtless was sanctified to his Good, in that Particular. *Hezekiah's* Sin was Vain-glory; Therefore Spoilers are sent to take away his Treasures.

5. IN the Duration of their Troubles; they shall not lie always upon them. Our GOD is a GOD of Judgment, *Isa. xxx. 18.* He knows the due Time of removing it, and is therein punctual to a Day, *Rev. ii. 10.*

### REFLECTION.

IF the Wisdom of GOD do thus triumph in the Distresses of his People, then why should I fear in the Day of Evil! Why doth my Heart faint at the Foresight of approaching Trouble? Fear none of those Things that thou shalt suffer, O my Soul! If thy GOD will thus be with thee in the Fire and Water, thou canst not perish. Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, yet let me fear no Evil, whilst my GOD is with me. Creatures cannot do what they please, his Wisdom limits and over-rules them all, to gracious Ends. If my GOD cast me into the Furnace, to melt and try me, yet I shall not be consumed there; for He will sit by the Furnace Himself all the

the while, observing when it hath done its Work, and then will presently withdraw the Fire. O my Soul, bless and adore this God of Wisdom! Who Himself will see the Ordering of all thine Afflictions, and not trust it in the Hands of Men or Angels.



## CHAP. XXIX.

### OBSERVATION.

**T**HE Ocean is so deep that no Eye can discover what lies in the Bottom thereof. We use to say proverbially of a Thing that is irrecoverably lost, *It is as good it were cast into the Sea.* What lies there, lies obscure from all Eyes, but the Eye of God.

### APPLICATION.

**T**HUS are the Judgments of God, and the Ways of his Providence, profound and unsearchable, *Pf. xxxvi. 16. Thy Righteousness is like the great Mountains, and thy Judgments are a great Deep: i. e.* His Providences are secret, obscure, and unfathomable; but even then and in those Providences his Righteousness stands up like the great Mountains, visible and apparent to every Eye. These Wheels of Providence are dreadful for their Height, *Ezek. i. 18.* There be deep Mysteries of Providence, as well as of Faith. It may be said of some of them, as of *St. Paul's Epistles*, that they are *hard to be understood.* Dark-

## 326 *A New Compass for Seamen:*

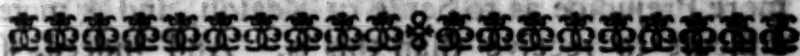
ness and Clouds are round about the Throne of God: No Man can say what will be the particular Event of some of his Dispensations. *Luther* seemed to hear God say to him, when he was importunate to know his Mind in some particular Providence, *I am a GOD not to be traced.* Some Providences, like *Hebrew Letters*, must be read backward, *Psalms xcii. 7.* Some Providences pose Men of the greatest Parts and Graces. *His Way is in the Sea, his Paths in the great Waters, and his Foot-steps are not known, Ps. lxxvii. 19.* Who can trace Foot-steps in the Bottom of the Sea? There be some of God's Works that are such Secrets as that they may not be enquired into; they are to be believed and adored, but not pryed into, *Rom. xi. 33.* Others that may be enquired after, but yet are so profound that few can understand them. When we come to Heaven, then all those Mysteries, as well in the Works, as in the Word of God, will lie open to our View.

### R E F L E C T I O N.

THEN why is my Heart disquieted, because it cannot sometimes discern the Way of the LORD, and the Connection of his providential Dispensations? Why art thou so perplexed, O my Soul, at the Confusions and Disorders that are in the World! I know that Goodness and Wisdom sits at the Stern: And tho' the Vessel of the Church be tossed and distressed in Storms of Trouble, yet it shall not perish. Is it not enough for me, that God hath condescended so far for my Satisfaction, as to shew me plainly the general Issue of all these mysterious Providences, unless I be able to take the Height of every Particular? Shall I presume to call the God of Heaven to Account? Must He render a Reason of his Ways, and give an Account



count of his Matters to such a Worm as I am? Be silent, O my Soul, before the LORD; subscribe to his Wisdom, and submit to his Will, whatsoever He doth. However it be, yet God is good to *Israel*; the Event will manifest it to be all over a Design of Love. I know not how to reconcile them to each other, or many of them to the Promise; yet are they all harmonious betwixt themselves, and the certain Means of accomplishing the Promises. O what a Favour is this, that in the Midst of the greatest Confusions in the World, God hath given such abundant Security to his People, that it shall be well with them?



CHAP. XXX.

OBSERVATION.

**W**HAT Multitudes of Men hath the Sea devoured! Thousands have made their Graves in it. What Numbers of Men have been ingulphed together in Sea-Fights, or Storms, or Inundations, whereby whole Towns have been swallowed up! Certainly the Dead, which are there are innumerable.

APPLICATION.

BUT tho' the Sea hath received so many thousand Bodies of Men into its devouring Throat, yet is it not the absolute Lord or Proprietor of them, but rather a Steward intrusted with them, 'till the LORD require an Account of them; and then it must deliver up all it hath received.

Rev. xx. 11, 12. *And I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before GOD: And the Books were opened; and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the Dead were judged out of those Things which were written in the Books, according to their Works. And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it.*

THE Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body, is a Doctrine full of Consolations to Believers, and most clearly asserted in Scripture. And it is well for us this Point is so plainly revealed; because, as it is a most comfortable Truth to the People of GOD, so there is scarce any Truth that lies under more Prejudice as to Sense or Reason, and is more difficult to receive than this is. And indeed, if Men set up Reason as the only Judge of supernatural Things, it is incredible to think that a Body should be restored that hath been burnt to Ashes, and those Ashes scattered in the Wind, as History tells us was frequently done in *Dioclesian's* Reign! Or when drowned in the Sea, and there devoured by several Fishes, and those again devoured by others. But this is not to be objected to the Almighty Power of GOD, that gave them their first Being. Difficulties and Impossibilities are for Men, but not for Him. *Why should it be thought a Thing incredible with you, that GOD should raise the Dead?*

### REFLECTION.

AND must I rise again, wherever my Body fall at Death? Then, LORD, how am I concerned to know *Christ* while I live? By Virtue thereof only my Resurrection can be made comfortable to me. Let my Body lie where it will, in Earth or Sea: Let my Bones be scattered, and Flesh devoured  
by

by Worms or Fish, I know Thou canst and wilt reunite my scattered Parts; and in this Body I must stand before thine awful Tribunal, to receive according to what I have done therein. Thou that commandedst me to stand forth amongst the noblest Rank of Creatures, when I had no Being, and sawest my Substance, being yet imperfect, canst as easily reduce me to that Being again.

WHAT tho' Reason vote this impossible, and Sense incredible? Tho' all these Difficulties grow upon my Faith, yet I know my Body is not lost for ever: The Sound of thy Trumpet shall awaken me; and thy mighty Power, to which all Things are possible, shall bring me before thy Bar.

O LORD, I know that I shall stand in that great Assembly, when Multitudes, even all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* shall appear together. O! If I die *Christless*, it were Good for me that there were no Resurrection: For then those Eyes that have been Windows of Lusts, must behold *Christ* the Judge, not as a Redeemer, but as a Revenger. That Tongue that has vented so much of the Filthiness of my Heart, will then be struck Speechless before Him; and this Flesh, which I so pampered, condemned to everlasting Flames. O my God, let me make sure Work for such a Day. If I now am really united with thy Son, I shall awake with Singing out of the Dust: And then, as Thou saidst to *Jacob*, say to me, when I go down into the Sea or Grave, *Gen. xli. 3, 4* *Fear not to go down into the Deep; for I will surely bring thee up again.*





## C H A P. XXXI.

## O B S E R V A T I O N.

**T**HOUGH Seamen meet with violent Storms, yet if they have Sea-Room enough, they are not much dismayed; but if they find themselves near the Shore, they look upon their Condition as very dangerous. The Sight of the Shore is to them (as *Solomon* speaks of the Morning in another Case) like the Shadow of Death, if not able to weather it. For one Ship swallowed up in the Ocean, many perish upon the Coast.

## A P P L I C A T I O N.

THE greatest Difficulties that many meet with in all their Lives, is when they have almost finished their Course. Heaven indeed is a glorious Place, the spacious Mansion of the great King; but it hath a *strait and narrow Entrance*. O the Difficulty of arriving there! What earnest Contention and Striving, even to an Agony, as that Word imports! *Luke* xiii. 24. Multitudes put forth, and by Profession are bound for this *fair Haven*; but of the Multitudes that put out, how few arrive there? A Man may set out by a glorious Profession, with much Resolution, and continue long therein; he may offer very fair for it, and not be far from the Kingdom of God, and yet not be able to enter at the last.

YEA, and many of those who are sincere in their Profession, and do arrive at last, yet come to Heaven (as I may say) by the Gates of Hell; and put in, as a poor Weather-beaten Vessel comes into the Harbour, more like a Wreck than a Ship, nor Mast nor Sail left. The Righteous themselves are scarcely saved, i. e. they are saved with much Difficulty: They have not all *an abundant Entrance*, as the Apostle speaks, 2 Pet. i. 11.

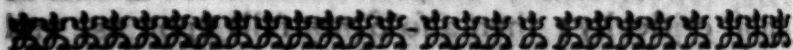
SOME Persons (as one notes) are *afar off*, Eph. ii. 23. i. e. *touched with no Care of Religion*. Some come near, but never enter; as *Semi-converts*. Others enter, but with great Difficulty; they are saved as by Fire; make an *hard Shift*. But then there be some that go with full Sail before the Wind, and have an *abundant Entrance*; they go triumphing out of the World. When we come into the narrow Channel, at the very Point of Entrance into Life, the Soul is then in the most serious Frame, all Things look with a new Face. Conscience scans our Evidence most critically; then also Satan falls upon us, and makes his forest Assaults. It is the last Encounter; if they escape him now, they are gone out of his Reach for ever: And if he cannot hinder their Salvation, yet if he can but cloud their Evening, he reaches another End by it, even to confirm and prejudice the Wicked, and weaken the Hands of others that are looking towards Religion.

### REFLECTION.

If this be so, how inevitable is my Perdition, may the careless Soul say? If they strive so much, and go so far, yet perish at last; and if the Righteous themselves are scarcely saved, then where shall such a Creature as I appear? O LORD, if they that have made Religion their Business, and have been  
many

many Years pursuing a Work of Mortification, have gone mourning after the LORD JESUS; yea, if some of them have such hard Work at last, what will become of such a sensual, careless Wretch as I have been?

AGAIN, Do true Christians find it so strait an Entrance? Then, though I have well-grounded Hopes of safe Arrival at last; yet let me look to it, that I do not increase the Difficulty. They are the Things that are now done or omitted, that put Conscience into such an Agony then; for then it comes to review the Life with the most serious Eye. O let me not stick my Death-bed full of Thorns, against I come to lie down upon it! O that I may turn to the Wall in that Hour, as *Hazekiah* did, 2 *Kings* xx. 2, 3. and say, *Remember now, O LORD, I have walked before Thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart!*



## CHAP. XXXII.

### OBSERVATION.

**W**HAT Joy is there among Seamen, when at last, after a tedious and dangerous Voyage, they descry Land, and see the desired Haven? Then they turn out of their Cabbins, and come upon open Deck with much Joy. Now they can reflect with Comfort upon the many Dangers they have past; *Olim hæc meminisse juvabit*, It is sweet to recount them.



A P P L I C A T I O N.

BUT O, what transcendent Joy will over-run the Hearts of Saints, when after so many Conflicts, Temptations, and Afflictions, they arrive in Glory, and are harbour'd in Heaven, where they shall rest for ever? The Scripture saith, *They shall sing the Song of Moses, and of the Lamb*, Rev. xv. 3. The Song of *Moses* was a triumphant Song, composed for the Celebration of that glorious Deliverance at the *Red-Sea*. We are now fluctuating upon a troublesome and tempestuous Sea; our Hearts sometimes ready to sink and die within us, at the Apprehension of so many and great Dangers and Difficulties. Many a hard Storm we ride out, and many Straits and Troubles we here encounter with; but at last we arrive at the desired and long expected Haven, and then Heaven resounds with joyful Acclamations. And how can it be otherwise, when as soon as ever we set Foot upon that glorious Shore, *Christ* Himself meets and receives us with a *Come ye blessed of my Father?* Matt. xxv. 34. O joyful Voice! O much desired Word! What Tribulation would not a Man undergo for this Word's Sake.

O WHAT a Day will this be! "If (saith a worthy Divine) *Diagoras* died away with an Excess of Joy, whilst he embraced his three Sons that were crowned as Victors in the *Olympick* Games in one Day: And good old *Simeon*, when he saw *Christ* but in a Body subject to the Infirmities of our Natures, cried out, *Now let thy Servant depart in Peace*: What unspeakable Joy will it be to the Saints, to behold *Christ* in his Glory, and see their Relations also, (to whose Conversion, perhaps, they have been instrumental) all crowned in one Day with everlasting Diadems! And if the Stars did  
(as

# 334 *A New Compass for Seamen:*

(as Ignatius saith) make a Choir, as it were, about that Star that appeared at *Christ's* Incarnation, and there be such Joy in Heaven at the Conversion of a Sinner: No Wonder then, *the Morning-Stars sing together, and the Sons of GOD shout for Joy, when the general Assembly meet in Heaven.* O how will the Arches of Heaven ring and eccho, when the high Praises of GOD shall be in the Mouth of such a Congregation! Then shall the Saints be joyful in Glory, and sing aloud upon their Beds of everlasting Rest.

## REFLECTION.

AND is there such a Day approaching for the Sons of GOD indeed! And have I *Authority* to call myself one of the Number! O then let me not droop at present Difficulties, nor hang down my Hands when I meet with Hardships in the Way. O my Soul, what a joyful Day will this be! At present we are tossed upon an Ocean of Troubles, Fears, and Temptations; but these will make Heaven the sweeter.

CHEAR up then, O my Soul, *thy Salvation is now nearer, than when thou first believedst, Rom. xiii. 11.* And it will not now be long ere I receive *the End of my Faith;* and then it will be sweet to reflect even upon these Hardships in the Way. Yet a few Days more, and then comes that blessed Day thou hast so long waited and panted for. Oppose the Glory of that Day, O my Soul, to thy present Sufferings; and thou shalt see how it will shrink them all up to Nothing. Oppose the Inheritance thou shalt receive in that Day, to thy Losses for *Christ* now; and see how joyfully it will make thee bear them. Oppose the Honour that will be put upon thee in that Day, to thy present Reproaches; and

and see how easy it will make thee. What Condition can I be in, wherein the believing Thoughts of this blessed Day cannot relieve me?

AM I poor? Here is that which answers Poverty, James iii. 5. *Hearken, my beloved Brethren, hath not GOD chosen the Poor of this World, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom?*

AM I tempted? Here is Relief against that, Rev. xii. 10. *Now is come Salvation and Strength; for the Accuser of our Brethren is cast down.*

AM I deserted? Here is a Remedy for that too, Rev. xxii. 5. *And there shall be no Night there.*

COME then, my Soul, let us enter upon our Inheritance by Degrees, and begin the Life of Heaven upon Earth.

## CONCLUSION.

I HAVE now done, and am looking to Heaven for a Blessing upon these weak Labours: What Use you will make of them, I know not; but this I know, that the Day is coming, when God will reckon with you for this, and all other Helps and Means afforded to you: And if it be not improved by you, be sure it will be produced as a Witness against you. Sirs, I beg you in the Name of *Christ*, before whom both you and I must shortly appear, that you receive not these Things in vain. Did I know what other lawful Means to use, that might reach your Hearts, they should not be in vain to you;



you; but I cannot do God's Part of the Work, nor yours. Only I request you all, both Masters, common Men, and all others, into whose Hands this shall come, that you will lay to Heart what you read; pray unto Him *that hath the Keys of the House of David, that openeth and no Man shutteth*, to open your Hearts to give Entertainment to these Truths. Alas! if you apply it not to yourselves, I have laboured to no Purpose, the Pen of the Scribe is in vain; But God may make such an Application of them, in one Stream or other, as may make your Hearts to tremble. O Sirs, when Death and Eternity look you in the Face, Conscience may reflect upon these Things to your Horror and Amazement, and make you cry out, as *Prov. v. 12, 13. How have I hated Knowledge, and my Heart despised Reproof? And have not obeyed the Voice of my Teacher, nor inclined my Ears to them that instructed me?* And O what a dreadful Shriek will such Souls give, when the LORD opens their Eyes, to see that Misery thas they are here warned of! But if the LORD shall bless these Things to your Conversion, then we may say to you, as *Moses* did to *Zebulun*, the Mariner's Tribe, *Deut. xxxiii. 12. Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out.* The LORD will be with you which Way soever you turn yourselves; and you are safe in the Midst of all Dangers. O Thou that art the Father of Spirits, that formedst, and canst easily reform the Heart, open Thou the blind Eye, unstop the deaf Ear, let the Word take Hold upon the Heart: If Thou wilt but say the Word, these weak Labours shall prosper, to bring Home many lost Souls unto Thee. *Amen.* 6 JY 64

*End of the Forty-Third VOLUME.*

THE  
**C O N T E N T S**  
 OF THE  
**FORTY-THIRD VOLUME.**



Extracts from Dr. South's SERMONS.

Page

SERMON I. On Wisdom.

Prov. iii. 17. *Her Ways are Ways of Pleasant-*  
*ness* — — — — 5

SERMON II. Of the Image of God in Man.

Gen. i. 27. *So GOD created Man in his own*  
*Image, in the Image of GOD created He him* 30

SERMON III. On the Extent of the Divine  
 Providence.

Prov. xvi. 33. *The Lot is cast into the Lap, but*  
*the whole Disposing thereof is of the LORD* — 49

SERMON IV. The Practice of Religion  
 enforced by Reason.

Prov. x. 9. *He that walketh uprightly, walk-*  
*eth surely* — — — 75

SER-

# THE CONTENTS.

Page

## SERMON V. Of Friendship.

John xv. 15. *Henceforth I call you not Servants; for the Servant knows not what his Lord doth: But I have called you Friends; for all Things that I have heard of my Father, have I made known unto you* — 101

## SERMON VI. Prevention of Sin an invaluable Mercy.

1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. *And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD GOD of Israel, who sent thee this Day to meet me. And blessed be thy Advice, and blessed be thou, who hast kept me this Day from coming to shed Blood, and from avenging myself with my own Hand* — 127

## SERMON VII. Of Spiritual Blindness.

Luke xi. 35. *Take Heed therefore, that the Light which is in thee be not Darkness* — 150

## SERMON VIII. On the Prosperity of the Wicked.

Prov. i. 32. *The Prosperity of Fools shall destroy them* — 178

## SERMON IX. On the Restoration of King Charles II.

Rom. xi. 33. *How unsearchable are his Ways, and his Judgments past finding out* — 199

Extracts



# The CONTENTS

Extracts from the Works of Mr. FLAVEL.

## *A New Compass for Seamen: Or, Navigation Spiritualized.*

	Page
The Epistle Dedicatory. To all Masters, Mariners, and Seamen — — —	227
An Epistle to Seamen sailing Heaven-ward —	233
Chap. 1. Upon the Launching of the Ship —	241
Chap. 2. On the vast Extent and Depth of the Ocean — — —	246
Chap. 3. On the Inhabitants of the Deep —	250
Chap. 4. On the Flux and Reflux of the Sea —	253
Chap. 5. On the Watchfulness of Seamen to prevent Danger — — —	255
Chap. 6. On the Steering of the Vessel —	258
Chap. 7. On the Waves — — —	261
Chap. 8. On the Mariners Skill in mana- ging the Sails — — —	266
Chap. 9. On the Watchfulness of Mariners to take the Wind and Tide — — —	268
Chap. 10. On the Commerce with other Countries — — —	270
Chap. 11. On the Stability of the Rocks —	273
Chap. 12. On the Adventures of Mariners for Gain — — —	276
Chap. 13. On the Care of Providence over the living Creatures in the Sea —	279
Chap. 14. On the Disagreeableness of the Waters — — —	282
Chap. 15. On the Bounds of the Sea —	285
Chap. 16. On the Use and Necessity of the Compass — — —	288
Chap. 17. On the Inconstancy of the Mo- tion of the Waves — — —	291
Chap. 18. Tempests Executioners of God's Threatnings — — —	295
	Chap.

# The CONTENTS.

	Page
Chap. 19. Merchandize to be thrown over-	
board in a Storm — — —	297
Chap. 20. The Sea not to be appeased —	300
Chap. 21. On the Plenty of Fish in the Sea	303
Chap. 22. The Mariners Skill in Fishing —	305
Chap. 23. On the Dearth of Trade to foreign	
Countries — — —	309
Chap. 24. On the Fishes of Prey —	312
Chap. 25. On Sailing in a Storm —	315
Chap. 26. On a Leak in a Vessel —	317
Chap. 27. On the Variation of the Wind —	319
Chap. 28. On fair Weather —	322
Chap. 29. On the Depth of the Ocean —	325
Chap. 30. On the Multitudes of Men de-	
voured by the Sea — — —	327
Chap. 31. The Danger of splitting upon the	
Rocks — — —	330
Chap. 32. The Joy of Mariners on descrying	
Land — — —	332
Conclusion — — —	335

6 JY 64



1  
 2  
 3  
 4  
 5  
 6  
 7  
 8  
 9  
 10  
 11  
 12  
 13  
 14  
 15  
 16  
 17  
 18  
 19  
 20  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25  
 26  
 27  
 28  
 29  
 30  
 31  
 32  
 33  
 34  
 35  
 36  
 37  
 38  
 39  
 40  
 41  
 42  
 43  
 44  
 45  
 46  
 47  
 48  
 49  
 50  
 51  
 52  
 53  
 54  
 55  
 56  
 57  
 58  
 59  
 60  
 61  
 62  
 63  
 64  
 65  
 66  
 67  
 68  
 69  
 70  
 71  
 72  
 73  
 74  
 75  
 76  
 77  
 78  
 79  
 80  
 81  
 82  
 83  
 84  
 85  
 86  
 87  
 88  
 89  
 90  
 91  
 92  
 93  
 94  
 95  
 96  
 97  
 98  
 99  
 100  
 101  
 102  
 103  
 104  
 105  
 106  
 107  
 108  
 109  
 110  
 111  
 112  
 113  
 114  
 115  
 116  
 117  
 118  
 119  
 120  
 121  
 122  
 123  
 124  
 125  
 126  
 127  
 128  
 129  
 130  
 131  
 132  
 133  
 134  
 135  
 136  
 137  
 138  
 139  
 140  
 141  
 142  
 143  
 144  
 145  
 146  
 147  
 148  
 149  
 150  
 151  
 152  
 153  
 154  
 155  
 156  
 157  
 158  
 159  
 160  
 161  
 162  
 163  
 164  
 165  
 166  
 167  
 168  
 169  
 170  
 171  
 172  
 173  
 174  
 175  
 176  
 177  
 178  
 179  
 180  
 181  
 182  
 183  
 184  
 185  
 186  
 187  
 188  
 189  
 190  
 191  
 192  
 193  
 194  
 195  
 196  
 197  
 198  
 199  
 200  
 201  
 202  
 203  
 204  
 205  
 206  
 207  
 208  
 209  
 210  
 211  
 212  
 213  
 214  
 215  
 216  
 217  
 218  
 219  
 220  
 221  
 222  
 223  
 224  
 225  
 226  
 227  
 228  
 229  
 230  
 231  
 232  
 233  
 234  
 235  
 236  
 237  
 238  
 239  
 240  
 241  
 242  
 243  
 244  
 245  
 246  
 247  
 248  
 249  
 250  
 251  
 252  
 253  
 254  
 255  
 256  
 257  
 258  
 259  
 260  
 261  
 262  
 263  
 264  
 265  
 266  
 267  
 268  
 269  
 270  
 271  
 272  
 273  
 274  
 275  
 276  
 277  
 278  
 279  
 280  
 281  
 282  
 283  
 284  
 285  
 286  
 287  
 288  
 289  
 290  
 291  
 292  
 293  
 294  
 295  
 296  
 297  
 298  
 299  
 300  
 301  
 302  
 303  
 304  
 305  
 306  
 307  
 308  
 309  
 310  
 311  
 312  
 313  
 314  
 315  
 316  
 317  
 318  
 319  
 320  
 321  
 322  
 323  
 324  
 325  
 326  
 327  
 328  
 329  
 330  
 331  
 332  
 333  
 334  
 335  
 336  
 337  
 338  
 339  
 340  
 341  
 342  
 343  
 344  
 345  
 346  
 347  
 348  
 349  
 350  
 351  
 352  
 353  
 354  
 355  
 356  
 357  
 358  
 359  
 360  
 361  
 362  
 363  
 364  
 365  
 366  
 367  
 368  
 369  
 370  
 371  
 372  
 373  
 374  
 375  
 376  
 377  
 378  
 379  
 380  
 381  
 382  
 383  
 384  
 385  
 386  
 387  
 388  
 389  
 390  
 391  
 392  
 393  
 394  
 395  
 396  
 397  
 398  
 399  
 400  
 401  
 402  
 403  
 404  
 405  
 406  
 407  
 408  
 409  
 410  
 411  
 412  
 413  
 414  
 415  
 416  
 417  
 418  
 419  
 420  
 421  
 422  
 423  
 424  
 425  
 426  
 427  
 428  
 429  
 430  
 431  
 432  
 433  
 434  
 435  
 436  
 437  
 438  
 439  
 440  
 441  
 442  
 443  
 444  
 445  
 446  
 447  
 448  
 449  
 450  
 451  
 452  
 453  
 454  
 455  
 456  
 457  
 458  
 459  
 460  
 461  
 462  
 463  
 464  
 465  
 466  
 467  
 468  
 469  
 470  
 471  
 472  
 473  
 474  
 475  
 476  
 477  
 478  
 479  
 480  
 481  
 482  
 483  
 484  
 485  
 486  
 487  
 488  
 489  
 490  
 491  
 492  
 493  
 494  
 495  
 496  
 497  
 498  
 499  
 500  
 501  
 502  
 503  
 504  
 505  
 506  
 507  
 508  
 509  
 510  
 511  
 512  
 513  
 514  
 515  
 516  
 517  
 518  
 519  
 520  
 521  
 522  
 523  
 524  
 525